

**Highlight Features  
in This Issue**

On the Trail With Dave - Tidings' Great Adventure  
Secret History of American River People  
107-Year-Old Schooner Hauled Out  
Buffalo Maritime Center Update  
Instant Indeed! - Building a 13' Peapod



# messing about in **BOATS**

Volume 36 – Number 9

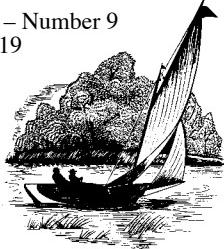
January 2019



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## Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor

Back in the November issue I mentioned looking forward to hearing some of your tales about shop projects that you may be occupying yourselves with through the coming winter. Now in early December, what is no doubt the biggest such project to surface within my purview is the subject of a feature article in this issue, coming to the fore with the arrival of the 84' schooner *Sylvana W. Beal* in Gloucester, Harold Burnham's next project. You can learn the details on pages 20-25.

This inspired me to take a look back through our 2018 issues to refresh my memory about the sort of projects that have appeared on our pages this past year. First off there were the regular monthly reports:

Dan Rogers reported in "Almost Canada" his solo (with phantom crew at times) rebuilding of the "house" on his cruising motorboat, *Miss Kathleen*, and then commenced work on a scaled down version, *Walkabout*, at year's end.

Dave Lucas reported most months (too hot in summer in Florida!) on goings on at his "Tiki Hut" as he undertook building a house on a salvaged 38' sailboat hull (at times taken aback by the enormity of it all) and also reported on the projects his Tiki Hut gang were into.

Gloria Burge has been at it all year working on her "Dancing Chicken" in her boat/camper hideout in the Maine woods.

Mississippi Bob Brown brought us "In My Shop" most of the year until family needs curtailed his working on the *Great #77*, named in honor for its place in the long line of boats he has built.

Several readers serialized their projects over several issues:

Steve Lapey chronicled The Norumbega Chapter of the Wooden Canoe Heritage Society building of a traditional wood/canvas Prospector canoe, successfully auctioned off at mid summer's WCHA Assembly.

Mark Frost built a West Mersey Duck Punt of foam, one of two projects undertaken in this non traditional material to appear on our pages..

Tom Hruby undertook to build a folding sailboat, Flapdoodle, "not for the beginner."

Jim Brown commenced building his own design trimaran, *Trilars*, but dissatisfaction with the wooden version caused him to switch over to foam with his *Trifoam 16*.

Richard Honan began building a 13' Peapod with enthusiastic help from a 14-year-old neighbor.

Dennis Schneider began his story of "My Seven Year Build" of a 35' catamaran of his own design.

I commenced the reconditioning of a 1929 Old Town Lake Rowboat here in my shop "greenhouse" annex, great for solar heat in winter.

One shot reports came from a number of readers:

Robert Jacobs asked "What's Wrong With Me?" analyzing his "some dozen" boats built to date and counting.

Douglas Brooks built a Japanese Tub Boat in the historic New England (since 1793) Lowell's Boatshop.

Refugee from Vermont's winters, Johnny Mack, tinkered with his beloved aluminum outboard *Bludgeon* in his new digs in North Carolina.

George Dibb of the Amateur Yacht Research Society undertook the design and building of a high performance two man "Daysailing Trimaran."

Finn Wilster had undertaken restoration of "a most beautiful hull," his *Sunny Sea*, from the remains of a neglected boat, a project he would sadly not live to complete. *Sunny Sea* was launched by family at year's end.

Dan Noyes shared his "Centennial Builders Notes" on building his 20' Banks dory, a replica of a dory that was rowed across the Atlantic over 150 years ago.

Jim Flood updated his 14' motor launch *Duchess*, making her longer and wider and with more freeboard.

Brian Forsythe detailed construction of his Core Sound 17, *Arjay*.

And Dave Lucas stepped outside his Tiki Hut to feature a tale of "Rebuilding a Star."

Passing mention of other projects appeared from time to time in stories about adventures and in letters on our "You write to us about..." pages.

Some of the serialized tales carry on into 2019 and several new reports are already in hand, so home building/restoring seems to be alive and well amongst our readers. Keep 'em coming, your stories provide inspiration for others to tell us about their dream projects.

## On the Cover...

That's the *Sylvana W. Beal* looking at you this month, just hauled out on the oldest continuously operating marine railway hereabouts at the Gloucester (Massachusetts) Maritime Heritage site. She is 107 years old and looks it. No longer fit for the dude schooner trade in Maine, she was collected up by Essex shipbuilder Harold Burnham and sailed down to Gloucester from Bar Harbor. Harold's plans for her are for a total restoration aimed at the National Register of Historic Places recognition and fit to operate out of Gloucester as a companion schooner to his *Ardelle*. It's going to take a while. Harold says it will be "fun." For the whole story see pages 20-25.



## Harking Back With Harvey

*"Small craft images from today as viewed through a long ago lens."*  
Images by Harvey Petersiel

*Rowing*





## Adventures & Experiences...

### Spring Seems So Far Away

Pictured below is a steamboating friend on the Connecticut River in mid October. We went out on Halloween with two boats and then we played it by ear to see how long we could make the fall season last. We need to keep steam launches above freezing temps in the fall as ice will burst copper tubing, water pipes, pumps and valves. Spring seems so far away right now.

Kent Lacey, Captain Commanding,  
Steam Launch *Golden Eagle*, Old Lyme, CT



### About That Heart Attack

Thanks for making what must have been a tremendous effort for getting the November issue out. Most of us would have stayed in bed for a couple of months, forgetting about anything related to work. Very courageous of you.

I had a similar experience about 30 years ago but had an angioplasty instead of a stent. Subsequent tests over the years have shown the heart to be working normal but I did clean up my diet and tried not to take the world so seriously. I have to say that sailing and boating helped a lot. Right after that episode I started building the Glen L 8-Ball dinghy from plans (a traditional plywood build) and helped another friend build another dinghy using stitch and glue. Learning how to sail the 8-Ball without falling overboard was lots of fun. Haven't had a heart problem since.

So restoring your Old Town Rowboat is the best therapy I can think of. I look forward to reading about it in future issues.

Joe Bohnaker, El Paso, TX

### More About That Heart Attack

I read in the November issue that you had a heart attack. Glad to see you got immediate attention and are doing well. Inserting a stent in a clogged artery is a fairly routine job these days.

But you are not the only one with heart trouble. On June 12 I had open heart surgery to replace my ascending aorta and aortic valve. My aorta had developed a serious aneurism (bulge) which distorted the attached valve. To do this they had to open my entire chest. It then took months to get back to normal. All is fine now but I had to

# You write to us about...

miss my annual Blackburn Challenge race as well as my usual ocean paddling trips, so no trip reports for *MAIB* were forthcoming in 2018. I am very thankful for the expert medical care I received at the Portland Medical Center. I'll be back to full power in 2019.

Reinhard Zollitsch, Orono, ME

### Still More About That Heart Attack

Lucky Bob Hicks, because the 911 response acted quickly and it is 2018 when the medical people can fix that heart stuff at once.

Lucky Sam Chapin, Eustis, FL

**Editor Comments:** Thanks to all of you who wrote encouraging notes to me, your ongoing support is vital to what I do.

### November Cover Memories

That November cover brought back memories, Charlotte and I (and Carrie Rose) drove into the waiting tub at Peterborough, tied to the frame and down we went. When I turned the motor off and looked out there was green farmland 65' below us, what a sight. I was just sad that it did not last longer. Before we knew it the gate in front of us opened and we motored out.

Dean Raffaelli, Chicago, IL

### My Favorite Boat?

The inquiry that arrived about this topic ended up, "...what are some of your all time favorite boats?"

First I had to try to remember all the boats that have owned me in my life. That took a tablet and some furious scribbling. Not counting boats rented, borrowed, stolen, crewed aboard or lusted after and lost, my list grew to 45. I don't suppose there has ever really been a period when I didn't have at least one boat I could say was mine in at least the most recent 65 years or so. During short times "in between" one of those other categories took over. I suppose it's possible to have too many boats. Just about impossible to not have any boats.

The "favorite" is, I'm ashamed to report, one that got away. About 40 years ago I had an extended flirtation with a little girl for sale in a brokerage down someplace on Lake Union. She wasn't new, or all that pristine. But I think about that little boat to this day. One of those shoulda coulda woulda stories. She was one of the earlier members of what I tend to call the Golden Age of Fiberglass Sailboats, a Sparkman and Stevens design from the MORC era. A nicely proportioned hull with keel/centerboard and attached rudder, auxiliary outboard hidden in the lazarette well, teak cabin sides and cockpit coamings.

She was a boat I entertained dreams of sailing back to Hawaii. I'd already crossed the Pacific several times at the behest of Uncle Sam and desperately wanted to do it again, this time on my own bottom. For several months of deliberation, test sails and repeated visits down to call on ol' Bish Wheeler and see if he maybe had better news from the seller, I was pretty doggone sure this one would be The One. Didn't happen.

She was a factory built Yankee Dolphin 24. Not a whole lot of them were ever built. They are still what you call a "cult boat." Most of the original products of Yankee and O'Day and a few others are still loved and kept alive and often kept near new. Since that unfulfilled quest back in the mid '70s I have sailed on several sister ships and gawked at others I have run across, here and there, on all three coasts.

As these things go, the story doesn't quite end there but just what made that particular boat, out of the literally hundreds I have sailed, paddled, rowed and motored through tens of thousands of nautical miles, so darn special? A stormy day on winter Lake Washington, just one more test hop.

I suppose it was blowing 25 with gusts in the 30s. These days I'd certainly reef and maybe even stay pierside on a day like that. But then, we're all older, perhaps even wiser, than we once were. Full main, jib strapped in, heeled down with the lee coaming submerged and trailing a wake from the bronze sheet winch, stomping off to windward. My brother was along that day and, when he spelled me at the helm, I remember going below by walking on the cabinet faces. Sure, we were overpowered. So what? We were also hollering with the complete, visceral joy of it all. A sustained gust hit and drove the lee coaming completely underwater.

That little girl stayed like a locomotive on rails. She didn't round up, she didn't even stutter. We just kept driving. I never needed more than a finger or two on the tiller and the deck winch was trailing a quarter wave! There have been great boats that came later. I've sailed and been intimate with just about every design produced during the '60s, '70s and on into the '80s. After that, things got too big and expensive and unseamanlike for my taste but never another quite like that little Yankee. The one that got away.

Dan Rogers, Newport, WA

## Information of Interest...

### Ottersports Follow Up

Following up on my article in the December issue about the Ottersports Touring Single I made during the early 1970s, here are a couple of additional photos. The first photo includes, from left to right, PBK 14 (Blandford's name for the design was "Sesqui"), a PBK 15 and the Ottersports Touring Single. Interesting to view contemporary plywood vs fabric covered contemporaries. The other picture is of the Ottersports Touring Single on flat water.

Arthur Strock, Belvidere, NJ





## Projects...

### A Letter to Jim Brown

Your precision, patience and forethought notwithstanding, I have been fascinated with the progress reports from your Foamshop project(s). You being the thoughtful engineer type and me being the spaghetti against the wall purveyor of wunderwhuts, I can see a possibility for conflation here. I need another boat like another hole in the head, to get my travelling companion, Jamie the Seadog, from our normal anchorages to shore for him to conduct his business in a more orderly fashion than might be available for him aboard. We've used and modified and messed with a whole collection of small vessels for this purpose. Like everybody, we have our parameters. Almost no small boat that is stable, capable and towable on the water is light, easy to transport and durable while getting to that water. So this is what I'm wondering.

Over the years I have carried various roto molded kayaks of various stripes (and

some without any stripes) on the big boats' trailer(s). I've even attempted to do this with small rowboats and even inflatables to less satisfactory ends. Basically, the quickie in out required of a solo launcher makes messing with an awkward dinghy at the same time as whomping a couple ton mothership in and out of the launch ramp while a line of Jim Bob and his metalflake bassboats piles up in the waiting area, a bit of a social engineering problem. It gets even more complex attempting to extricate (and replace) a boat from my pickup's bed during the same "bloodletting at the Roman Coliseum" episode. So what I'd like to have is a Boat for all Reasons that:

Fits in the short bed of Big Red, my F-150 beast of burden, with the gate left up to allow for the hitch business to not get all scratched up by that tailgate.

Is light and facile enough to lift in and out of the truck bed without disturbing the little boat's gunnels and hardware by accidental dropping and sliding across the Ford's paint job.

Is tough enough to bounce a bit on pavement and rocks and the normal impedimentia of trailerboating and anchoring out.

And the biggee, is stable enough to step down into from the mothership while carrying a toy poodle in a life jacket while wearing my own lifejacket and suffering from a pernicious case of progressive bilateral knee-moanya without flipping, swamping or otherwise embarrassing ourselves in the process. That's the parameters.

Here's the wundrwhut: What do you think about my building a foam and canvas

catamaran (like one of the smaller Livingstons, or one of the several knockoffs most of us have towed along at one time or another) that would sit in a 60"x65" truck bed? Sort of like taking your Trifoam main hull and grafting another alongside with the rowing saddle, cum bridgedeck, low enough and sturdy enough to sit on and row conventionally and keep those stiffened knees splayed out into the two "sternsheets" of the two hulls.

And while I'm presupposing you're even moved by my plea for consultation, what do you think such a contraption would weigh?

Dan Rogers, Newport, WA, (509) 447-2197, DanAshore@conceptcable.com

## This Magazine...

### About My \$500 Yacht

Thanks for publishing my story about my \$500 yacht in the December issue. Here is a photo of the Independence about 1973.

Grey Pettys, Westerly, RI



## Where Aweigh and Whither Bound?

By Dan Rogers

about everyplace else to live, to me this is the crummiest place for a sailor to live!

For the longest time I've tried to share that notion. I've been saying things like, "Come up this way, bring your boat. We've got so many spectacular places to go, so many secluded hidey holes to anchor in, so much clear water and tall timber. Just show up, you'll love it!" And every now and again

somebody will do just that and the unanimous verdict is, "Wow! This is great! I've just gotta come back again..."

They, almost never do. The young ones say they're too busy. The old ones say they're too tired, it's too far to drive or too cold or too hot or it's Tuesday. Living in a country increasingly covered by over crowded cities and flat, dry land, it seems to me a place like here would be a regular Mecca.

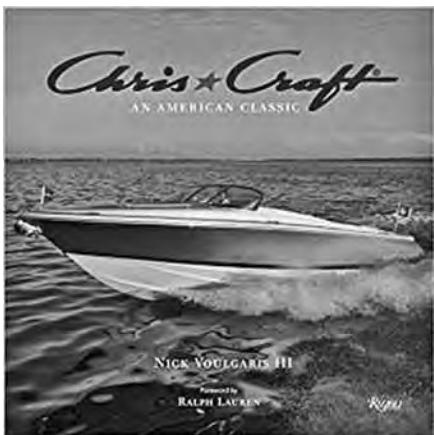
Another Voyaging Season will soon be upon us. If you can see your way clear to come up this way, we'd be happy to show you around, if you'd like some company, that is. There's plenty of room and the natives are pretty friendly.

The onset of that mythical "Currier and Ives Season" tends to confuse some of us this time of year. OK, maybe it's just me, I tend to lose track of things. I THINK this will be our tenth winter living here on the hard after all those years afloat in San Diego. When we first got here in Almostcanada, a well meaning future neighbor eyed my road weary Chevy van, then towing my road weary red sailboat (with prominently displayed California plates and CF numbers) and offered a succinct warning, "...you know...it snows here..."

After a decade of plowing and shoveling and driving in and slipping on that snow and ice, I must admit it, winter here in Almost-canada can be pretty crummy. Except for just

# Chris-Craft An American Classic

By Nick Voulgaris III  
Rizzoli International Publications  
New York, NY  
Reviewed by Boyd Mefferd



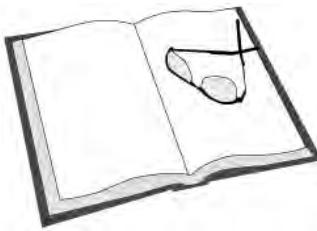
Since their early evolution in the 1920s, photographers have been pointing their cameras at mahogany runabouts. The invention of color film just made the photos better. As a hobby grew up around owning and restoring runabouts, books with history and photos weren't far behind. With this Chris-Craft book, Nick Voulgaris has taken things one step beyond the earlier authors with a book that is 85% full page photos, many of them centerfolds.

In 1977 Bob Speltz of Albert Lea, Minnesota, published the first of his series, *The Real Runabouts*. Bob couldn't work because of a genetic kidney disease and he compiled his books during the hours he spent in dialysis. He featured a number of builders, including Chris-Craft, and his technique was simple. When he got enough material, mainly from factory brochures, to make a book, he published. When he got more, including some more obscure builders, there was another book. He got out six before he died and, for a long time, they were the best source available.

*The Legend of Chris Craft*, the first book exclusively covering Chris-Craft, came from Jeffrey Rodengen in the summer of 1988 and was a nice mix of text and big, splashy photos. While the Speltz books were mainly black and white, Rodengen took full advantage of color photography and printing. The text was good, for the most part, but contained a number of factual errors.

Joe Gribbins, the editor of *Nautical Quarterly*, reviewed the book for *Wooden-Boat* magazine and made a point of saying that the text could have benefitted from better fact checking and proofreading. I wrote to Joe, whom I did not know at that time, to say that his review was spot on. He had seen errors that I had missed and I was able to point him towards a couple more that he had passed by. Joe called from Mystic Seaport, where he was the head librarian, to thank me for my letter of support. He said that he had received a lot of hate mail from his review and appreciated my confirmation. We became friends and would visit each time I went to the Seaport.

Nick Voulgaris, unfortunately, carries on this tradition of errors and it makes me wonder who proofread his book. In fairness,



## Book Reviews

it is mainly a photo book but with just a little more care the level of accuracy could have been vastly improved.

With the history of Chris-Craft boats there is really no excuse because Jerry Conrad, who was the head librarian at the Mariners' Museum in Virginia, published *Chris-Craft, the Essential Guide*, a massive 721 page book with data covering virtually all of the production up to 1977. There is exactly one page for every model made with the basic information taken from the records on length, beam, materials used and engine options. In 721 pages I've only spotted a couple of errors.

It's a little embarrassing when the average hobbyist reader probably knows more than an author. The Chris-Craft Cobra was the most unique boat the company ever built with its gold dorsal fin, and anyone who knows anything about Chris-Crafts knows that they came in two lengths, 18' and 21'. Voulgaris somehow thinks it was 21' and 23'. The first fiberglass covered Chris-Craft, the 19' Silver Arrow of 1958 and 1959, turns into the "Silver Bullet" in the text, but is correctly identified in the photo descriptions. At one point in the text it is said that Japan surrendered in January of 1945. Clearly both the author and the proofreader were asleep in history class.

Most of the excellent photos are correctly identified, but several simply are not the models they are claimed to be. In the early 1930s a 21' Custom Runabout and a 25' Custom had a whole different deck treatment. Anyone who knows anything could have pointed that out. The popular Holiday series started as a radical 23' utility with many completely new design features in 1950, at a point when styling still mainly continued pre WWII ideas. This boat is mentioned only as having "blonde trim" when actually half the hull sides were stained blonde. Voulgaris correctly identifies the later Holiday models as Continentals with a utilitarian interior at a more attractive price. Just like Chevy with the top of the line "Bel Air" being kicked down a notch when the "Impala" was introduced, the Holiday started out as the very top of the line and only later (1955) became the cheapie.

Voulgaris owns a fiberglass 23' Chris-Craft Lancer and much of the focus of his book is on the 'glass boats. I've never owned one of them and don't know a lot about them. The first 104 pages focus on the wooden boats, while the next 117 cover the "Fiberglass Revolution" and the contemporary boats that are being built and sold with the Chris-Craft name.

In 1960 some members of the Smith family, who owned and had built up Chris-Craft, wanted to cash out and ended up selling to a conglomerate corporation which promised to run the company as it had always been run. This promise was kept for a while,

but over time the ambitions of investors won out over solid boat building and Chris-Craft declared bankruptcy. Dale Murray (Murray Industries) purchased the boat building operation, but not the Chris-Craft name, and built the company until he became bankrupt due to real estate losses completely unrelated to boats. OMC, which owned Johnson and Evinrude, purchased the company but again corporate, not boating, problems plagued the operation and Chris-Craft was again bankrupt in 2000.

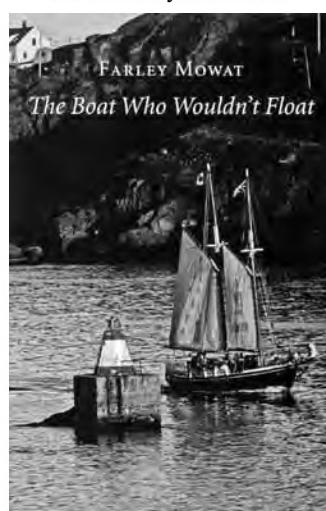
In his *Legend of Chris-Craft* book of 1988, Jeffrey Rodengen provides an excellent detailed explanation of the corporate ups and downs and ends his book with the sentence, "There will always be a Chris-Craft."

In 1988 Rodengen did not know how risky a prediction that was going to be, but in 2000 two classmates from Harvard Business School, Stephen Julius and Steve Hess, bought the factory in Sarasota, Florida, and then were able to obtain licensing rights to the name. They rebuilt with a new line of Chris-Craft boats. Fortunately they saw the value in the name when others did not. The last 88 pages of Voulgaris' book are like an elaborate sales brochure for their efforts and the photos are indeed beautiful.

Of all the books I've seen on Chris-Craft, Voulgaris' is the nearest to being purely a picture book and maybe it should just be judged as such. He uses the work of numerous photographers but took many of the photos himself. I don't understand the economics of publishing, how sure one can be of making money, but there is a time honored tradition of either knowing the material well or getting help with it. When you write a book you gain the status of an instant expert, whether you are or not. Voulgaris is a serious sailor and owns a vintage Alden ketch. He obviously loves boats, but I wish he had taken just a little more care with the text. All in all, the book costs \$65 and would make a great Christmas gift for any runabout person.

## The Boat Who Wouldn't Float

By Farley Mowat  
Nonpareil Books  
David R. Godine, Publisher  
PO Box 450, Jaffrey, NH 03452  
[www.godine.com](http://www.godine.com)  
ISBN 1567926207 - Softcover \$15.95  
Reviewed by Bob Hicks



### What the Publisher Says

"Happy Adventure backed all the way out of Muddy Hole harbour under full sail. I think it must have been the most reluctant departure in the history of men and ships. And a remarkably prophetic one, as later events were to prove.

Happy Adventure was a ship who was truly committed to doing her own thing. Cajoling her, threatening her with death, even reading to her sometimes worked. But not always. And, as the unquestionable heroine of this remarkable tale, she inevitably cast Farley Mowat and assorted crew members in the role of anti-heroes. "Anti" because they were mainly involved in getting her afloat, preventing her from being seized by "that sinking feeling" and persuading her to go in the direction charted.

Nevertheless, her adventures and misadventures along the coast of Newfoundland provided Farley with many idyllic as well as appalling experiences including introducing him to the intrepid Claire, who signed on first as his shipmate, then as his wife.

Finally, Happy Adventure was persuaded to leave her native shores and to accept the surprise welcome waiting for her at Montreal's 1967 World Fair Expo.

This lusty, tender and riotous tale is further enriched by the stretch and flavour of Farley Mowat's writing and by many passages of poignant beauty and realism. It is Mowat in the best Mowat tradition, magnificently entertaining and magnificently human."

### About the Author

Farley Mowat (1921-2014) was a Canadian writer, environmentalist and activist. After serving in the military and exploring as a field technician in remote areas of Canada, Mowat published his first book, *People of the Deer*, in 1952. Over the next half century he published dozens more, including *Never Cry Wolf*, an account of his adventures studying the Arctic wolves of northern Manitoba. Over a long career, he received the Mark Twain Award, the Governor General's Award for Juvenile Fiction and the first Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Outdoor Book Award.

### What This Reviewer Says

It must be 30 or more years since I first read this book, my early days of enthusiasm for small boats had me reading everything and anything I could find on the subject. Now it returns as a reprint soft cover of 294 pages, arriving unbidden in our mail. I seemed to recall it was sorta funny first time around so I proceeded to delve into its pages to see if it would again catch my fancy. I had forgotten its details, only its main premise remained in memory, it was about a boat that had a mind of its own, exasperating its owner when he tried to sail away in her, usually with sudden urges to sink. I was hooked again and the next two evenings I actually did not fall asleep as I raced through the pages to see what would come next.

Mowat's writing borders on hyperbolic, every situation he describes is determinedly over the top, often decked out with colorful adjectives to fully develop the scene, which is principally on the southwest coast of Newfoundland with its population of fishermen left pretty much behind by progress. Mowat buys a semi derelict old schooner from a local to pursue a dream of sailing off to tropical isles far, far away. He spends the better

part of the next seven years in this effort, stymied at every turn by the schooner, apparently unwilling to depart good old Newfie.

The title of the book is best explained in this short excerpt describing the first effort at launching her after lengthy and costly refitting:

"Late on the evening of the tenth we finished paying her seams and painting her bottom and at high tide hauled her to the head of the wharf. She immediately proceeded to give evidence of what was to be her most salient characteristic. She leaked as no boat I have ever known, before or since, could leak. The water did not seem to enter from any particular place, but to come in by some arcane process of osmosis through every pore. It was necessary to pump her every hour, on the hour, and in between the hours, just to keep abreast of the inflow. There was no question of getting ahead of it since there were only three of us and we could only operate three pumps at a time.

The little schooner's apparent desire to commit hara kiri did not bother Enos or Obie (local helpers – Ed.). From Enos I heard a phrase which was to echo like an eternal whisper in my ears throughout the next several years, 'Southern Shore boats all leaks a drop when they first lanches off,' Enos told me soothingly, 'but once they's been afloat a day or two, why they takes up.'

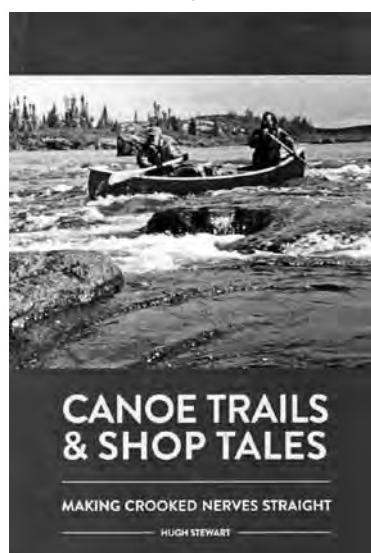
Like most things Enos told me there was truth in this. Southern Shore boats do take up. They take up unbelievable quantities of salt water and they take up most of a man's time just working at the pumps. The fantastic arm and shoulder musculature of Southern Shore fishermen is sufficient testimony to this."

It is a fun read if you can accept the notion of boats having minds of their own. Those of you with us back in the late '80s will recall similar tales in Tom McGrath's "Adventures in a Townie" series.

## Canoe Trails & Shop Tales Making Crooked Nerves Straight

By Hugh Stewart

McGahern Stewart Publishing  
11 Murray St, Ottawa, ON K1N9M5  
mcspublishing@gmail.com  
ISBN 978-0-9868600-7-2 (Soft Cover)  
Reviewed by Bob Hicks



### What the Publisher Says

Memorable characters are everywhere in these stories. There is the inimitable Russ, who was the director at Camp Temagami when Hugh was a young man learning to be a guide, the wonderful Bell family from whom Hugh and his coworkers buy cedar and ash for their canoes and Willie Williams, the inspiring Tahltan Elder from northern British Columbia.

"Cultural Custodians" introduces the many friends who have helped Hugh preserve both the techniques of wooden canoe building and the practice of traditional travel skills.

In two essays the author takes an historical look at canoeists and wilderness travelers of the past. There are thought provoking pieces on wilderness preservation and forest management issues and detailed accounts of two very remote trips which Hugh took, one in Labrador and Quebec on the Petit Mecatina River and one on the Barrens in the Northwest Territories.

Cover photo: Bob Kimber in the bow, the author in the stern on the Attikona River, Labrador, August 1999. Photo by Garrett Conover. The canoe is Neil McDonald's Atkinson Traveler which he built in Rollin Thurlow's shop in Atkinson, Maine.

### About the Author

Now Guide Emeritus at Camp Temagami, Hugh Stewart has been part of the Lake Temagami canoeing culture since 1959. He has spent decades of summers and 13 winters in Temagami and has also paddled extensively in various parts of northern Canada.

Few canoe builders have equivalent field experience. Attuned since boyhood to the northern past, Hugh has devoted himself to honouring its iconic symbol, the canoe, by following in the paths of men long dead, by teaching hundreds the skills of the paddle and trail and by keeping alive the art of building strong, practical watercraft of great beauty. He is a Canadian exemplar.

Headwaters Canoe Shop, now capably run by Kate Prince and Jamie Bartle, proudly continues to construct fine wood canvas canoes.

Hugh and his partner Cathie Campbell live in Wakefield, Quebec.

### About the Publisher

McGahern Stewart Publishing brings out of print and hitherto unpublished accounts of northern travel to the public's attention in a series called "Forgotten Northern Classics." McGahern Stewart Publishing is committed to making these historical northern titles available in high quality, handsome editions with maps, photographs and supplementary editorial material for the readers of the literature of the north.

### What This Reviewer Says

Patrick McGahern's description of his offerings above is dead on for me. I have read and reviewed three others to date, *Distant Summers*, *A Thelon Odyssey* and *That Summer on the Nahanni*. Long fascinated by tales of the far north, I loved them all and look forward to another to come, *Distant Summers*. All set within my 88 year lifespan (since ca 1930) they are the stories of the lives of those who chose to live and work in an unforgiving wilderness when technology (read float planes and radios) was just beginning to take it all away forever.



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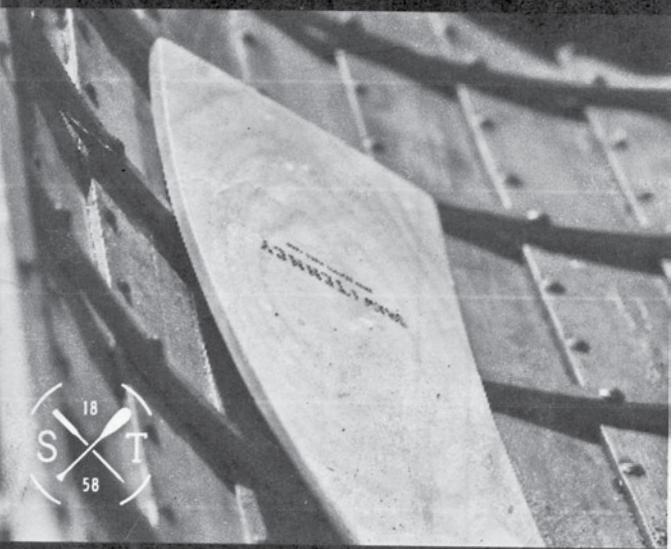
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It is with a sense of loss and reverence that I must announce that Dave Getchell, Sr passed away at home in mid November at age 89. A self effacing soul, "Getch" called himself co founder of the Maine Island Trail, although he was our de facto leader.

In 1987, following a period of exploration of Maine's state owned islands in his trusty tin boat, *Torngat*, Getch declared, "In studying this bounty, it occurred to me that here was a rare chance to develop an outstanding waterway for small boats." He further suggested that this unusual "water trail" could be managed by the people who used it, The Maine Island Trail Association. These ideas met with mixed response, with some 500 people joining MITA in its first year and others expressing concern. Undaunted, Getch and his followers persevered and multiplied for the next 30 years with the result being the Trail and organization we know today.

Two days before his death, Getch told me on the phone that he had enjoyed a fabulous life and had "no complaints." He also expressed that there should be "no mopping" when he was gone. So please join me in checking your sorrow and honoring Getch and his extraordinary achievements.

## Obituary

David R. Getchell, Sr  
December 31, 1929 - November 10, 2018

David R. Getchell, Sr, 89, author, editor and outdoorsman, died as he wished, at home and surrounded by family on November 10. Over the course of 22 years, he was managing editor and editor of the *Maine Coast Fisherman*, *National Fisherman* and founding editor of the *Small Boat Journal* and the *Mariner's Catalog* in Cam-

In 1979 a wonderful new magazine devoted to small boats appeared in our mail, a complete surprise. *Small Boat Journal*, opened up a new world of small boating I was only just beginning to look into. Its large 11"x11" format presented an array of small craft that drew me right into my future. Dave Getchell, Sr was the Editor and it was an offshoot of *National Fisherman*. Dave's introductory issue editorial explained its sudden appearance as follows:

"This summer Americans are being reminded once more that the days of cheap, plentiful fuel are gone forever. The implications of this fact are being felt across the full extent of the marketplace, with concern focused on automobiles, now, and autos and home heating next winter. Blame for this travail is being cast in all directions and we have no intention of adding brickbats to the barrage. Suffice it to say that times are changing everyone's way of thinking.

Downsizing is already a buzz word in the auto industry, and while its effects are yet to be seen in boats, one can be sure that potential boat owners and naval architects are giving the new realities plenty of consideration. Fortunately, on the water there is no minimum requirement for speed such as that demanded of vehicles using our highways. A well designed large boat can operate quite well with a small engine and small boats can go fast with moderate power almost as well as with high or excessive power. Of course, boats move well under sail or potato power also, so no one is about to be denied access to the water because of the high cost or shortage of fuel.



## Dave Getchell Sr. Has Left Us

By Doug Welch, Executive Director  
Maine Island Trail Association



den, Maine. Later, he co founded the Maine Island Trail and created the Georges Highland Path, a 40-mile long hiking trail system in the midcoast for Georges River Land Trust. In 1994, he edited and was lead author of *The Outboard Boater's Handbook*.

Active in the founding or operation of several nonprofit environmental organiza-

tions, he always made time for his favorite sport of surf fishing. He also partnered in 1980 with mountaineer Geof Heath of Hammondsport, New York, in a month long, two man climbing expedition 400 miles along the Labrador coast in an 18' open boat.

In the early 1980s he and his wife Dorrie made a number of long bicycle trips, the most ambitious being a five month, 8,000-mile cross country tour to the West Coast and back to Maine. Both considered this a high point in a happy marriage of 67 years.

Mr Getchell was born in Bangor, Maine, the son of George V. and Nettie R. Getchell. He graduated from Bangor High School, attended Bowdoin College and graduated from the University of Maine in Orono with a degree in journalism. He served in the US Army as an infantry training officer. He is survived by his wife Dorrie, his son David, Jr of Camden, his daughter Heidi and her husband David Perkins of Lincolnville, a sister, Virginia E. Naugler of Hartford, Connecticut, two granddaughters, Ali and Holly Perkins of Lincolnville, two nephews, Robert Verrier III of Cumberland, Maine, and James S. Naugler of LaCrosse, Wisconsin, a niece, Michelle Verrier of Cody, Wyoming, a sister-in-law, Barbara Hall of Westbrook, Maine, and two cousins, Betty Heald of Lincolnville and Marjorie Lucas of Florida. A niece, Martha Kaul of Lincoln, Nebraska, predeceased him.

A celebration of his life and work was held November 18, 2018. Donations in memory of Mr Getchell can be made to the Maine Island Trail Association, 100 Kensington St, 2nd floor, Portland, Maine, 04103; the Georges River Land Trust, 8 No Main St, Suite 200, Rockland, Maine, 04841 or Friends of Baxter State Park, PO Box 609, Union, Maine, 04862-0609.

## And Then There Was SBJ!

By Bob Hicks

But the rising cost of energy may prove to be more important ultimately than the availability of any particular fuel. Nothing can be built or marketed without consuming a certain amount of energy in the process, and it is here that downsizing some of our plans and dreams will be imposed. As the cost of boating, like anything else, rises, many people must look at smaller craft if they are to take to the water. With those with doubts about the practicality and fun of living exclusively with small boats, please accept our assurance that such an existence is possible. Most boating is done near shore, whether along the coast, or on inland lakes or rivers. This is small boat country, a place of coves and inlets and backwaters that those with larger boats never see.

This will also be the country of *The Small Boat Journal*. We see the present energy turmoil as the beginning of a long term change that will affect our life styles across the board. It is an important point in the history of small boats, too, for with new emphasis on the type, there are bound to be impressive gains in the design of boats and the means of powering them. we will follow these developments, attempt to interpret them and help where we can in expanding knowledge about small boats, not only among those new to the type, but also among those who long ago discovered the fascination and endless variety to be found in building and using them.

This is the first monthly issue of *The Small Boat Journal* (March 1979, Ed.) and

begins what we hope will be a long and exciting voyage of discovery. Our pilot issue last spring gave us a model to work from, but it will take the building blocks of monthly issues to bring this magazine to the point where it is serving the small boat owner as we want it to. The heartening response that has come from those who have read the pilot issue assures us that we are headed in the right direction, and the ideas and suggestions many have offered have been carefully considered as we put together this issue and plan for others to come. We know from this response that what we suspected when we contemplated a new magazine, that a publication concentrating exclusively on good small boats of all kinds is wanted by thousands of boat owners.

We intend to make *The Small Boat Journal* "their" book."

For a the next three or so years Dave's dreams were realized as he brought to all of us small boat folks who signed on as subscribers just what we were looking for. Unhappily, the necessary advertising support to fund so dramatic (that oversize format especially!) a "niche" publication was not forthcoming (small boat folks were not regarded as good prospects for products and services offered by the consumer boat business) and our dream book had to shut down, salvaged by being sold off to new publishers who changed its format and content in pursuit of advertising and so we lost Dave's evocative overview of the charms of our small boating thereafter.

In 1989 we joined Dave for a day on his Maine Island Trail to see what it was all about and the next four pages reprinted from our October 15, 1989 issue reveal what we learned.



## On the Trail with Dave

Oak Island was our last port of call on our whirlwind trip amongst the islands of Penobscot Bay with Dave Getchell, Sr. Just off the northern tip of North Haven Island, Oak is a small privately owned island entirely open grassland over its rocky foundation. Dave had beached the boat on a little pocket beach behind a bar that broke the chop the southwest wind had been building up all afternoon. To my surprise, Dave admitted this was the first time he'd been on this island. The owners had recently asked what use it might be put to.

Dave Getchell, Sr. is very busy these days with his crusade to develop a trail of islands along the Maine Coast open to small boat people for day use and, in many cases, overnight camping. Since he left his career as editor of "National Fisherman" (and in its early years, "Small Boat Journal") Dave has been sort of semi-retired, not because of age, but because he wanted to do some other things with his life. He and Dorrie sold their home and land near Camden and bought acreage in remote Appleton, about 15 miles inland from Lincolnville on Penobscot Bay.

Here they designed and built their own house overlooking a millpond on which they have long frontage. Then Dave got involved with the Island Institute, a non-profit organization of people interested in the preservation of the Maine islands and their lifestyle, including many island owners. They needed professional help editing and publishing their annual yearbook, "Island Journal". From this work Dave developed his vision of the Maine Island Trail.

Jane and I had joined Dave on a foggy August morning in his 18' Lund "Alaskan 18" aluminum outboard workboat for a day "on the trail". Dave spends much of his time once winter has gone out on the water looking at islands. Now as we were headed home from Oak Island it appeared we'd be heading right into a threatening looking thunderstorm area that had built up over the mainland to our west and spread out over Isleboro, where we were now headed. So we geared up in our foul weather gear. Had I been skipper on my own small boat, I'd have waited for the menacing storm to move on by before heading back, but Dave knows the area and

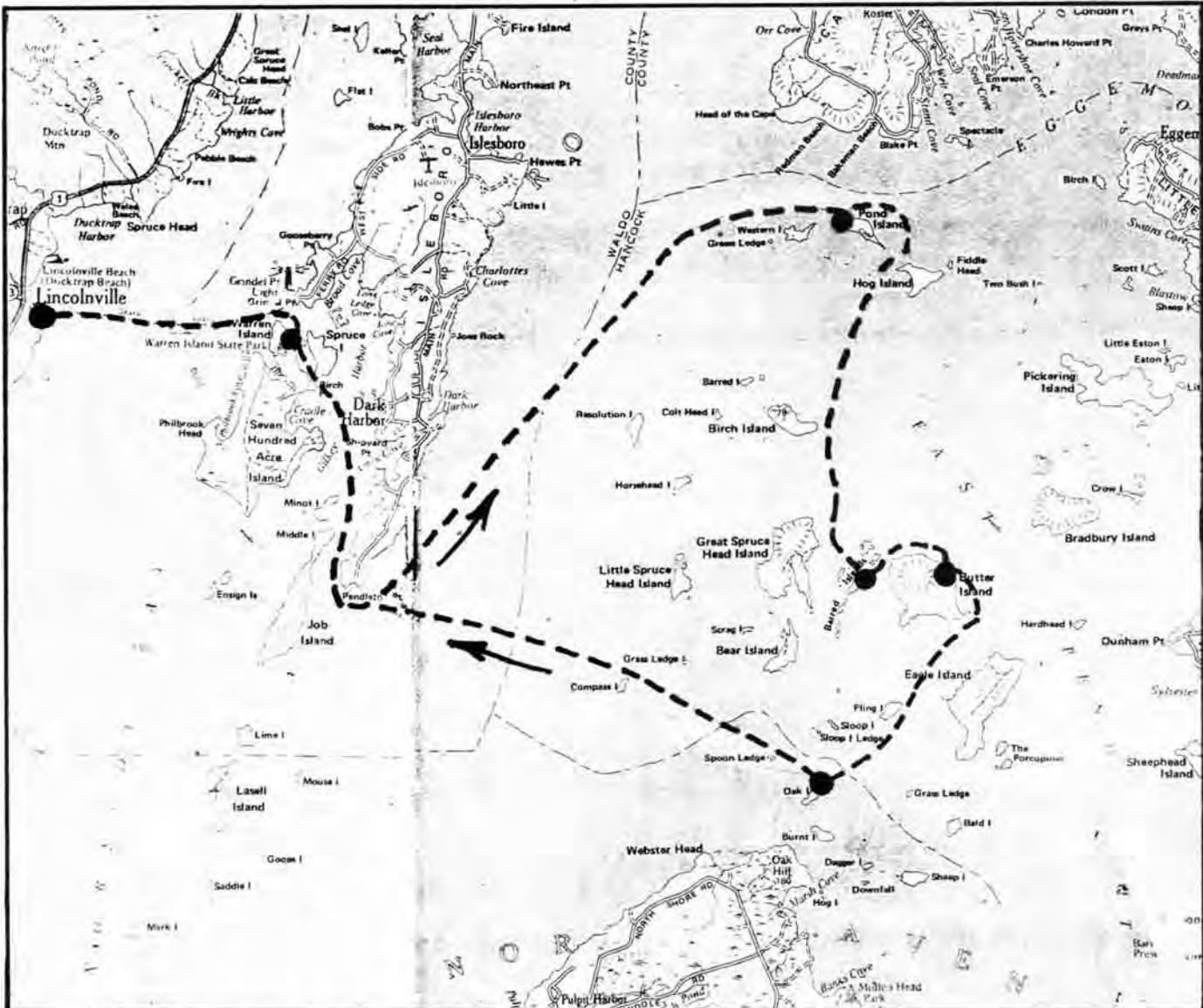
felt we'd miss most of it.

Well, he was right, we hit a brief patch of torrential rain and hail just beyond Compass Island, but by the time we approached Isleboro the storm was well to the north of us. Even at its nearest and most threatening, it had not delivered the anticipated strong gusts, in fact it killed that southwester dead and flattened the sea right down, a welcome change from banging into the chop much of the day.

We'd started off at Lincolnville where Dave launched the boat, and headed east into the fog for the short hop over to Isleboro. Our first stop was actually Warren Island, part of the Isleboro archipelago, and a state park. State owned islands are the foundation of the Maine Island Trail; but Warren is the only one designated as a fully developed park for camping. Camping is permitted on the other state islands on the Trail, but on a "wilderness" basis, ie. no facilities. The MITA annual meeting would take place on Warren Island in September, and Dave wanted to visit with the park manager to discuss arrangements. It would be after tourist time and so the entire place would be pretty much available for the MITA meeting.

We departed from Warren Island and headed south down past Dark Harbor in the bay between Isleboro and Seven Hundred Acre Island. Rounding the southern tip of Isleboro, we swung into the northeast and gradually pulled away from sight of any land in the fog. In a while Green Ledge and Western Island appeared to starboard, and rounding the latter we then slanted east to Pond Island, our next stop. Pond Island is privately owned, but the Island Institute is negotiating its purchase and permission to include it in the





Trail is included. A convenient small beach appeared and we went ashore, hiking up an open slope facing west to look around. The fog was beginning to lift and we could look north to nearby Cape Rosier. Pond would be an ideal island for the less experienced small boater to enjoy, launching from Cape Rosier with only a couple of miles of water to transit to reach the island. This would be particularly accessible to the beginner coastal kayaker.

We left Pond and passed through the turbulent overfalls between it and Hog Island, headed south. The channels between some of the islands have tidal currents that can create a lumpy sea at certain times. Dave's skiff is a big boat and had no problems with the steep chop here, it just banged over it at slow speed. Now with the southwest wind ahead of us, we splashed through chop several miles, passing Birch Island to our right, swinging by Great Spruce Head Island with its summer homes and landing on one of the Barred Islands for lunch. These small is-

lands are connected to one another with gravel bars. We anchored in another tiny baylet out of the wind and enjoyed lunch, including hot soup heated on Dave's little camp stove. Directly across a narrow channel was a larger island, Butter Island, our next stop. All of these islands are privately owned but the owners tacitly permit day use of Barred and Butter, where there are no summer dwellings.

We cruised around to the northeast side of Butter Island where a long beach opened up before us, and again went ashore. Butter has a prominent hill on its northern shore, the upper portion open grassland, and we hiked up the trail to enjoy a now gorgeous view as the last of the fog had departed and Penobscot Bay spread out before us, with islands leading over towards Stonington to our east and southwest towards North Haven and Vinalhaven. Butter Island will become officially part of the Trail by next summer, Dave expects, and camping here should be a really glorious adventure. On the beach we met two couples who had come

ashore from their moored yachts, and Dave soon was telling them about MITA, and signing up one of them who expressed great interest in obtaining the MITA Guidebook (available only to members).

We left Butter around its eastern end and passed through between it and Eagle Island, heading southwest again into the stiff breeze and chop. Oak Island our next stop. Just off the northern tip of North Haven, Oak is an open grassy island with a moderate rise towards its center, plenty big enough for a few to camp on. It's privately held and not yet available for public use, but Dave has been talking with the owners and wanted to see first hand what it had to offer. He was delighted with what we found. Protected little beaches, open grassy land, and easily accessible from Vinalhaven for paddlers who might choose to take their kayaks over on the ferry and then tour the coasts of Vinalhaven and North Haven.

Well, why would any of these people who own these islands even want to hear about Dave's dream



and the prospect of the public using their private islands? You don't find landed folks readily opening their property to the public on the mainland. But islands are very vulnerable, the boating public tends to march ashore anywhere it can, especially on uninhabited islands where the likelihood of meeting a hostile caretaker or owner and being run off is remote. The state has a similar situation, a few people employed by the state's forests and parks (environmental management today) bureaus have responsibility for several hundred islands as well as shoreside lands. The odds are that anyone "trespassing" on any of these islands is most unlikely to be discovered, let alone ever prosecuted.

So, when a responsible, knowledgeable guy comes along and says, "Let's get responsible members of the boating public to work together with you who own these islands, to establish a non-destructive approach to public recreational use and thus protect your assets," they begin to listen. Government agencies have long worked with involved citizen groups on cooperative programs for management and use of public lands, so the state was ready. The presence of state support for Dave's Maine Island Trail Association, and the rapid growth to over 1,000 individual members supporting its preservationist approach to island use, has been very persuasive to private island owners, especially those already faced with ad hoc public use (and sometimes abuse) of their vulnerable islands. With several privately owned islands already in use on the Trail in 1988 and 1989, oth-



Left from top: Dave consults with the Warren Island park manager. Approaching Pond Island. The view west from Pond Island. Dave's "workboat", the pipe frame is for hanging onto while standing. Below: Checking for unauthorized campsites on a private island.



er prospective island owners are watching the results before deciding on whether or not to bring in their own islands.

Well, it would have been nice to have had time and permission to camp out on Oak Island, but we all had things to do and the island wasn't available yet anyway, so we returned to Lincolnville via Isleboro, that aforementioned thunderstorm darkening the sky to the north and east as we slid around behind it. Circling Warren Island before heading across to Lincolnville, we pulled up to the rocks exposed by the now low tide, and waded ashore to harvest a bucket of mussels for supper. It had been quite a day, a sort of fast-forward preview for us of the potential of the Maine Island Trail. And we'd only seen this one small portion in upper Penobscot Bay, for the Trail stretches from Portland to Eastport now.

The bug has bit, we'd like to go back next season, maybe with our Folbot double kayak, maybe even, eventually, with our Townie sloop. Dave gets around in an outboard because he has lots of territory to cover as he continues to develop and organize the island string making up the Maine Island Trail. The more leisurely approach by paddle or sail is where the recreational experience would be for us. If you'd like to try this yourself, read the following information on the Maine Island Trail Association, and then join up. Your \$25 annual contribution funds a marvelous opportunity for all to enjoy the beauty of the wild islands along the Maine coast.

Report & Photos by Bob Nicks

Below: Talking up MITA to some yachting folk on the beach on Butter Island. Right from top: The view from the summit on Butter Island, that's Dave and his boat on the beach. Checking out the wild edibles. Another pocket beach, there's plenty of them. "Well, what do you say? Like to join me on the Maine Island Trail?"



## The Big Idea

I have always been a planner, so when I reached my mid 50s I started thinking about what to do if I lived long enough to retire. I quickly made a long list because work has never been the focus of my life. I have always had hobbies and outside interests, with sailing being at the top of that list. One of the things I enjoy most about sailing is visiting new places. That's why I own small boats. I like to tow the boat somewhere on a trailer, go exploring for a few days and return home when I get tired or the weather turns bad. Over the last 12 years I have taken my catboat, *Comfort*, on mini adventures at a variety of places between Florida and Nova Scotia.

The idea came to me that in retirement I could expand where and for how long I do those kinds of trips. I decided to do a circumnavigation of the continental US by towing a small boat from place to place. I would choose the most interesting areas to sail, tow the boat there, sail for a series of two to three week visits, exploring various portions of each place, and return home in between episodes. I would leave the boat behind on the trailer as the trip progressed and return to it to begin the next leg.

I broke the itinerary down into seven regions: East Coast from Maryland to Maine, Lake Champlain and the Great Lakes, Seattle and the San Juan Islands, San Francisco and San Diego, the US section of the Gulf of Mexico, the Florida Keys and the East Coast from Florida to Maryland. If my health holds up and the experience continues to be fun, I hope to do one section each year for the next seven years.

## Choosing a Boat

I am a long time catboat enthusiast and I have no intention of parting with *Comfort*. She is wonderful for short cruises in protected waters. But for the circumnavigation I wanted a slightly larger boat with a cabin. The boat would need to be seaworthy and safe for short coastal trips, comfortable for two people to spend a week or more aboard, shallow draft because I enjoy exploring creeks and small bays, easy to launch and retrieve single-

# Tidings' Great Adventure (Part One)

By Douglass Oeller

Reprinted from *The Mainsheet*  
Newsletter of the Delaware River TSCA

handed and still fall within the realm of a traditional small craft with classic lines.

It turns out that this design brief is not easy to fill. My first thought was to acquire a Marshall Sanderling. I have admired those boats for years. I know that they sail well and I find them quite beautiful. But when I sat in the cabin of one, I found the roof was a few inches too low for comfort and there was not much room for dry storage for food and clothing.

So began my quest. I spent a year or more looking at ads for used boats and designs for new ones. I found the website for Swallow Boats and was intrigued by a couple of their designs but not the prices. Then I became very interested in the Dudley Dix Cape Cutter 19 and Cape Henry 21 designs. Sadly, I am not a boat builder and I learned that the cost for professional construction for either of these boats would put them out of my reach. In the spring of 2014 I noticed an ad for a used Cornish Shrimper 19. The design met all my needs and, because the boat was 16 years old, the price was not prohibitive.

The Shrimper was on Nantucket Island. After a telephone conversation with the owner, I decided to go and look at the boat. It happened that Mike Wick, Phil Maynard, Kevin MacDonald and I were already planning a road trip to attend the Maine Boatbuilder Show in Portland Maine. So we decided to include a short detour to Nantucket as it is (sort of) on the way. The four of us took the ferry from Cape Cod and spent about two hours crawling over, under and inside the Shrimper, which was in a poorly lit garage. We couldn't find any major flaws. Mike identified that the jib had UV damage. Kevin gave me some advice about what to beware of with marine diesel engines (the Shrimper has a Yanmar GM-10). I don't remember Phil expressing any reservations.

On the drive home from Maine we all discussed the matter and it was decided that I should make an offer. Kevin suggested that he could call first and offer half of the asking price to "soften" the seller. But I decided instead to offer what I thought was fair. A deal was reached and I returned in May to take possession of my new boat. I decided to change her name from *Eventide* to *Tidings* because this fell within another grand plan, which is to have three boats called *Tidings*, *Comfort*, and *Joy*.

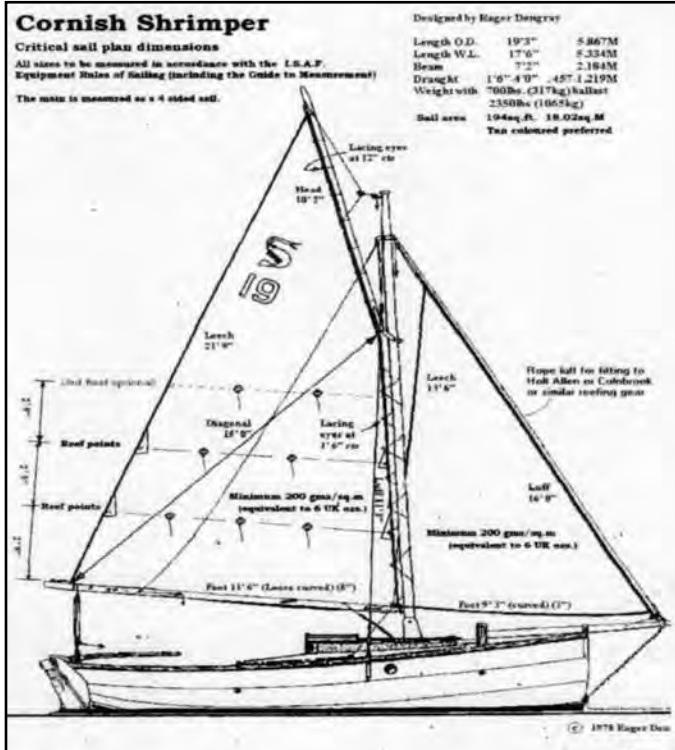
The Cornish Shrimper 19 is a fiberglass boat still in production in Wadebridge Cornwall, England. <https://www.cornishcrabbers.co.uk/shrimper-series/shrimper-19/> There are more than 1,100 Shrimpers sailing world wide but very few are imported into the US. The Shrimper is a gaff rigged sloop with a bowsprit. The jib has roller furling. The total sail area is 194sf. The spars are varnished wood. The interior of the cabin features varnished wood trim. *Tidings* is a "2+2" model, which has two quarter berths and a forward vee berth. The boat has a waterline length of 17'7" and an overall length of 22'6". The name 19 refers to the length over deck, which is 19'3".

The standard Shrimper has a well for an outboard motor within the starboard stern area of the cockpit so that the motor is forward of the transom. *Tidings* has an optional Diesel inboard engine. A 4gal fuel tank is in the area where the motor well would have been. The engine is a 9hp single cylinder Yanmar, famous for good fuel economy, dependability and vibration. When idling, it makes a characteristic pop, pop, popping sound that I have grown to enjoy.

The boat draws 18" of water with the centerboard up and 4" with the board down. The centerboard is a heavy galvanized steel plate. She also has 700lbs of internal ballast set in epoxy within the hull. The hull has small bilge keels on each side to support the boat so that it can safely sit level on the bottom in a harbor that has no water at low tide. The approximate displacement is 2,350lbs and the towing weight is 3,300lbs. This is a very sturdy little vessel and well suited to take me far and wide in safety and style.

## Making Some Modifications

Anyone who has ever owned a boat knows the temptation to "improve" on what the factory or previous owner delivered. Shrimpers have no boom crutch. There is a topping lift to raise the boom and one can cinch down tightly on the main sheet to keep



the boom relatively steady while not under sail. But when reefing in rough conditions (when else does one reef?), the long heavy boom flails all over and tries to knock one out of the cockpit. The first time I sailed *Tidings* I decided that she needed a boom gallows. Mike, Phil and several other friends tried to talk me out of this modification. It would be expensive, add weight to the stern and might ruin the lines of the boat. Phil suggested that I sail her for a season before making a final decision.

That was good advice, which I followed. Then I ordered bronze corner pieces for a boom gallows from the Port Townsend Foundry and took *Tidings* to Cutts and Case Shipyard in Oxford, Maryland, to have the gallows fabricated and installed. It was expensive and it did add weight but I have never regretted the decision. The gallows keeps the boom from swinging wildly when reefing or motoring, provides a handhold for climbing aboard after swimming, holds the mast when trailering the boat and looks so darn salty that it stings my eyes. As far as I can determine, *Tidings* is the only Shrimper in the world with a boom gallows. So it seems that there must be 1,099 oblivious owners out there. I pity them all.

The other major modification was to have the stainless steel mast tabernacle re-fabricated to extend its height. This allows me to leave the mast and shrouds attached to the boat while trailering. The tabernacle holds a pivot bolt through the mast at the height of the boom gallows. When lowering the mast, I have only to remove the forestay. The mast then lowers backward to lie perfectly horizontal supported in the bow by the

tabernacle and at the stern by the gallows. (I think I could write a country song about going from the tabernacle to the gallows, but I will leave that for another time.) The gaff jaws and mainsail luff must be disconnected from the mast before it is lowered. To make that easier I use mast hoops with small bronze quick disconnect fasteners purchased from the Pert Lowell Company.

*Tidings* also has some important improvements to the interior of the cabin. I am blessed to have talented friends who are sometimes willing to build things for my boats. Kevin Brennan custom built a tiny drop leaf table made of varnished oak to mount on the centerboard trunk. We designed it just wide enough with the leaves folded down to hold a whisky bottle. With the leaves up it makes a nice space for dining or reading.

The bottom of the table connects to an oak saddle that now covers the fiber-glass centerboard trunk. The edge of this saddle has a groove to accommodate a plywood filler board on each side so that, with



the addition of the boards and small filler cushions, the width of the two quarter berth bunks is extended to the center of the boat. I replaced the vinyl factory cushions with cushions of thicker foam upholstered in Sunbrella fabric.

I left the vee berth untouched but removed the vinyl cushions. The area is too small for an adult to sleep in. I use it instead to store a galley box, cooler and provisions for cruising. As a crowning touch I mounted a small brass oil lamp over the table. The lamp warms and dries the cabin quickly on damp days and provides a very cozy atmosphere.

These modifications occurred over a three year period during which I sailed *Tidings* in the Chesapeake Bay whenever time allowed. I also towed her to Maine for week-long cruises in 2015 and 2016 and to Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, for three weeks in 2017.

During the winter of 2016, I stripped the spars down to bare wood and applied eight coats of Epifanes high gloss varnish. Additional work included replacing all standing and running rigging, replacing the jib and roller furler, rewiring the boat, replacing the old electrical panel and its glass fuses with a modern circuit breaker panel, replacing the running, anchor and cabin lights with new LED versions, replacing the battery and installing a folding swim ladder on the transom. I had the trailer rewired and upgraded with LED lights, new bearings and new tires.

By the spring of 2018 I had reached a work status of "mostly retired" in my consulting business and *Tidings* was better than new. We were ready for Season One of the Great Adventure.



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Chart of the Hudson River.



Leaving Hell Gate behind.



Prison barge near New York City.

Approaching Rondout Lighthouse near Kingston, New York.



16 – *Messing About in Boats*, January 2019

## A SECRET HISTORY *of* AMERICAN RIVER PEOPLE

We learned about this unique adventure/project from an article published in a New York Hudson River newspaper sent to us by a reader. Our request to reprint the story went unanswered but the essential information culled from it is as follows:

Wes Modes and Lauren Benz, accompanied by Hazel the dog, are navigating the Hudson as part of a project organized by Modes, who teaches art at the University of California at Santa Cruz, called "A Secret History of American River People." For the past four years, Modes and his shipmates have been collecting stories from people who live and work along rivers.

"Rivers were the freeways of the 18th and 19th century and ideas moved up the river," he says. "If you were a river town, you were more cosmopolitan than a town that was a day's wagon ride 100 miles inland." The shanty boat also has traveled the Mississippi, Tennessee and Sacramento rivers.

We then went to the website and from it extracted several photos taken while they were on the Hudson and in New York City along with a brief discussion of the shanty-boat's design. To read the stories collected so far, visit [peoplesriverhistory.us](http://peoplesriverhistory.us).



Barge life near New York City.

Opposite Page: Exterior and interior views, along with the "Napkin Plans" for the "Secret History" research vessel.

### Beyond Napkin Plans

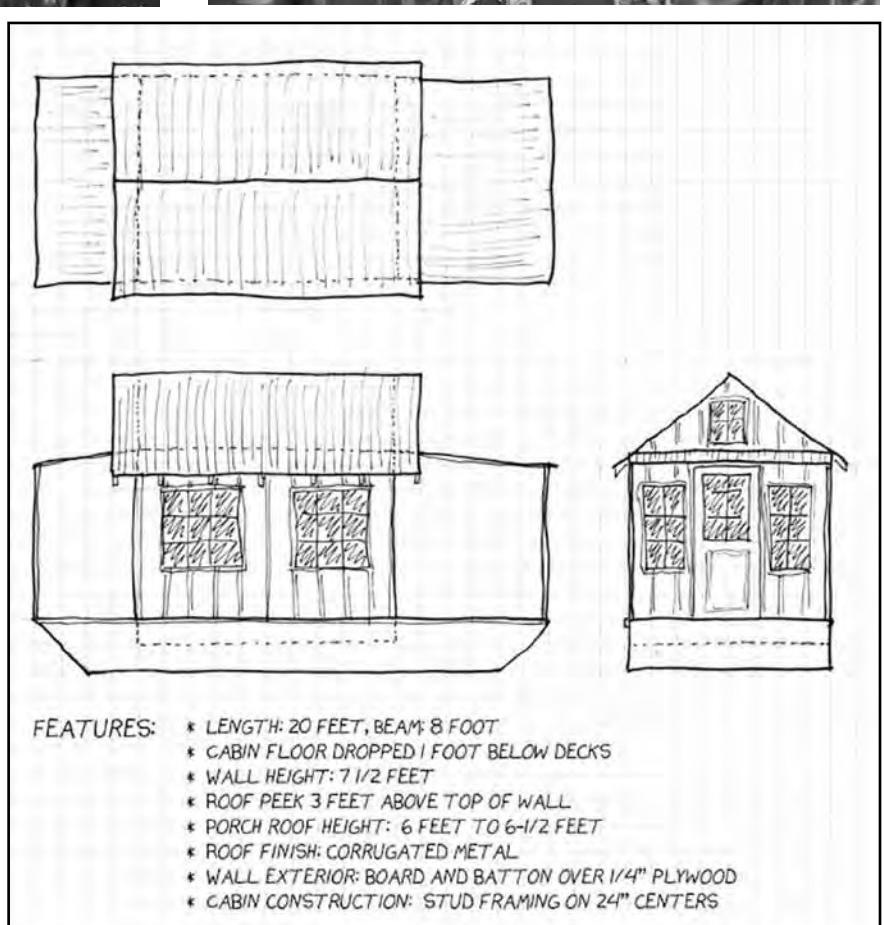
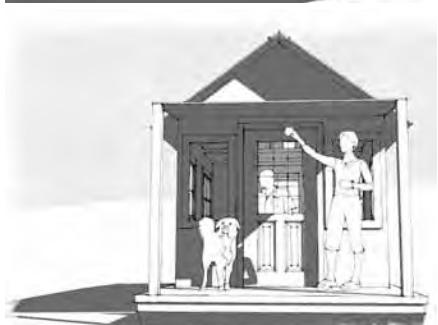
By Wes Modes

Ooo, graph paper! Getting fancy now. When I sketch it out proportionally, the shanty boat is less long and skinny than I had drawn it. In fact, it looks like a tiny shanty. On a boat.

I'd kind of like to make the cabin a little more squat, which I can afford to do since I've dropped the cabin floor a foot or more below the level of the decks. However, I am limited by a funny thing: The head height of the porches. They need to be at least 6' at the lowest part (and even that's pushing it a bit and likely to bonk any of my NBA friends).

There was some concern about balance with the cabin shifted back from center a bit. Mostly that is to give us a big fine front porch and it only shifts the cabin back about two feet. Plus I heard a boat builder suggestion to shift weight toward the back. It lifts the bow and allows us to take oncoming chop a bit better.

Oh why do I keep forgetting the head? There is a little 1½' deep x 3' wide bump out along the front (or maybe the back) where the head goes. Looking at it here, probably the back would be a bit more aesthetically pleasing. It bumps into the interior a foot and half also to make a tiny 3'x3' foot bathroom. The interior is 10'x 8'. A little SketchUp magic and Voila!



- \* LENGTH: 20 FEET, BEAM: 8 FOOT
- \* CABIN FLOOR DROPPED 1 FOOT BELOW DECKS
- \* WALL HEIGHT: 7 1/2 FEET
- \* ROOF PEEK 3 FEET ABOVE TOP OF WALL
- \* PORCH ROOF HEIGHT: 6 FEET TO 6-1/2 FEET
- \* ROOF FINISH: CORRUGATED METAL
- \* WALL EXTERIOR: BOARD AND BATTON OVER 1/4" PLYWOOD
- \* CABIN CONSTRUCTION: STUD FRAMING ON 24" CENTERS

## Accidents and Sea Stuff

The Tanzanian ferry *MV Nyerere*, mere yards from the docks, capsized off Ukerewe Island, the largest island in Lake Victoria. Some 224 people died in the accident that was evidently caused by an overload, a fairly common occurrence in African nations. Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania surround the lake. The military is attempting to right the boat. Forty-one people were rescued and one was later found alive in an air pocket. As investigations commence, all three nations are awash in finger pointing. The ferry's engineer locked himself in an airtight room and was found alive but in serious condition. He stated that the ferry capsized when all the passengers moved to one side as the boat approached the dock. This is not the worst Tanzanian ferry disaster. In 1996 the *MV Bukoba* capsized in Lake Victoria, killing 894 people. Earlier, the *MV Spice Islander* turned turtle off Zanzibar killing approximately 200.

The term "Collision at Sea" seems fairly apparent but lawyers and insurance companies have made the concept very interesting. The dictionary merely defines it as "an accidental contact between two vessels that causes damage." Kenneth McGuffies's tome, *The Law of Collisions at Sea*, is a 1,313 page discussion on the subject of collisions! Smacking a sunken ship. Yea or Nay? Striking an anchor. Yea or Nay?

The chronic problem of refugees attempting to cross large bodies of water to escape terrorism, unemployment, war, disaster, starvation, etc, continues on a daily basis. The discovery of overcrowded boats, rafts, trashcans filled with flotation and just about anything that can stay above water is so frequent that it no longer makes the news.

The nations on the northern side of the Mediterranean are tired of finding bodies on their beaches. The sundry Coast Guards are overwhelmed with rescue operations. Taking care of refugees is a major problem and huge financial cost to all of Europe to the point that elections from Italy to Finland are based on accepting or rejecting refugees. Campaigns of "Sweden for Swedes" or "Denmark for Danes" are the primary topics for debate.

Fifteen thousand refugees have died at sea since 2014. Five hundred and fifty have died in the first half of 2018. Millions of Syrians run through the Middle East to reach Libya and then attempt to boat to Italy. The government of Italy has announced that it will no longer accept any refugees nor will it allow charity based organizations' boats with rescued refugees to dock. Angela Merkel, Germany's Prime Minister, is under immense pressure to deny asylum to refugees. France also refused to allow a chartered ship carrying refugees to dock. The ship has also tried to land in Italy and other countries.

## Boat Stuff

Hurricanes are the grand nemesis for all sailors near oceanic waters. A recent article in *Maritime Executive* offered some excellent tips for saving boats in the path of a hurricane. Captain Obvious suggests you have a plan. Duh! Seriously, having a specific plan well before a storm hits is an essential place to start. Plan early, plan twice is not bad advice.

Writer Mayra Paris recommends that the owner have a good insurance policy, has all necessary documentation (registration, proof of ownership, etc) at hand and many current photos of the boat showing pre hurricane



## Over the Horizon

By Stephen D.  
(Doc) Regan

condition. She suggests that, if possible, he should pull his boat from the water and into a protected barn or shed. If he must leave his vessel in the water, a "hurricane hole" or well protected area in a river is important. Naturally, such a place needs to be sought and checked out well in advance of any storm. If the boat is in a marina it is important that he know the marina's plan of action because many of them expect significant assistance from the owners.

She also counsels that owners should use two or three lines for each point of anchoring, and it should be  $\frac{3}{4}$ " line for all boats 34' or larger. If in the hurricane hole, several anchors should be used as well as trees. She also states that filling the bilge with water helps keep the boat heavy and less likely to be tossed around. Wooden pilings, more flexible than concrete or steel, are typically better for holding. Finally, she posits that, if possible, point the bow into the wind.

For some odd reason the DNR owned sailboat area where I keep my beloved *Genny Sea* (WWP-1183) is full of Precision boats of all sizes. The quantity is amazing and very noticeable. The multitude of owners, as owners of all brands do, wax eloquently about the wonders to behold when sailing a Precision. From the 15-footer up to the 28-footer, the boats seem quick, stable and fun.

The bad news hit Lake McBride, Iowa, hard. Precision Boat Works has gone kaput. Phil and William Porter, owners of the company since founding it in 1978, have swallowed the anchor. Like so many previous boat builders, their business just isn't like it used to be. Bill has moved his location to Sarasota, Florida, and will still sell parts. The boats, originally designed by the esteemed Jim Taylor, have sold well over the years and they have a grand group of fans. Over 5,000 were made and probably most are still offering as much pleasure as they did the first day hull #1 hit the water.

## White Fleet

The Port of Tampa Bay is giddy with excitement as it noted its one millionth passenger through its terminal. Rapidly rivaling competitor Miami as a starting point for cruises, Port Tampa Bay announced that Carnival would have 20 more cruises to Cuba from Tampa. The Port set a record for a single weekend when 29,167 departed over the Easter weekend.

Hong Kong's Kai Tak terminal management is also jubilant over their passenger numbers as the two millionth passenger came through their port. Worldwide Cruise Terminal, Inc operates Kai Tak and Jeff Bent is the overall managing director of the terminal. He happily reported that it was only 15 months ago when they celebrated the first millionth passenger. Hong Kong is the primary center for Asian cruises.

Croatia's Uljanik Shipyard is under enormous pressure to turn into a profitable

operation. Even with a governmental loan of 96 million Euros, the yard is enmeshed in problems. The government desperately desires the company find a deep pocketed savior or thousands will lose jobs. Some investors have looked over the situation but no one has come forward yet.

## Rust Fleet

Kongberg Maritime signed a \$13 million contract with China Merchant Heavy Industry for the construction of a heavy lift crane used in the building of offshore drilling operations. This 700' long beast has a submersible main deck and can lift 3,000 metric tons of equipment for transport and installation of ultra large jacket foundations or 11x2000t XXL monopiles. The sophistication is in the computerized systems. The high tech suite provides integrated technical solutions for operational effectiveness. It also handles dynamic positioning, navigation, thruster control and all automation systems. It shall operate on a battery hybrid electrical package to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. For my perspective, this all means that the heavy lift crane can handle really big stuff needed to build bigger stuff. I thought oil came from a can.

Seafarer's Rights International was commissioned by the Transportation Workers Federation to establish a more concise understanding of legal principles and cabotage laws. The Jones Act of 1920 has been discussed at length in this space, however, each country has its own laws, mandates, rules, regulations, directives and instructions. Trying to comprehend and act appropriately is nigh on impossible. Airlines and vehicles (trucks) as well as shipping companies must abide by cabotage laws.

## Gray Fleet

The Navy Chief of Naval Operations (CNO, the Main Man), Admiral John Richardson, and the Vice CNO, William Moran, raised holy hell about the fleet's inability to respond to national needs, especially any assignment for carriers. Our primary sea thrust is essentially aircraft carriers, a concept that is questionable in itself, however, carrier deployment is at a 25 year low. During a three week period in 2018 no carriers could be deployed.

Both Richardson and Moran carry wings on their chest so they are pretty biased in perspective and their philosophy of naval warfare. They are not wrong in their concerns if indeed carrier warfare is our major orientation. Moran asserts that we are overusing our carrier force and pushing deferred maintenance to the limits. Congress, in their miserly ways, has simply not provided the fiscal funding to build new carriers and demanded instead that the current ones be refurbished.

Readiness deficiency is partially blamed on the shipyards that are overloaded, ancient and slow. Some of these yards commenced business prior to the American Revolution! They are old, decrepit and worn out, or so says the Pentagon who argues that less than one in three ships are repaired on time and sometimes it takes up to 50% longer than planned.

The Navy utilizes a Blue/Gold dual crew program whereby one complete crew is on assignment while the other is ashore. When their duty period is up, the Navy simply replaces the entire crew at one time. This keeps the crew from growing stale and keeps them ashore as much as possible. Furthermore, the Navy has 2+3 concept that means

two carrier groups at sea with three groups ready to reinforce them in 30 days (or so they hope). Even the CNO himself states that this is currently "not possible."

On top of everything our airframes are long in the tooth. The ubiquitous F/A-18EF fighter jets mission capable rates are in serious decline. The F-35 is supposed to take over that duty but it will be several years before the F/A-18EF's will be replaced. The F-35 is an Air Force, Navy and Marine Corp do everything kind of fighter that can meet the needs of the Air Force long range missions, can take off and land on carriers and be able to do close in troop protection required by the Marines. Kind of sounds like a LCS model for airplanes, doesn't it?

### Environment

About 50 years ago my cousins and I were camping along the Upper Iowa River when fish flies (mayflies, shadflies, whatever) overwhelmed us. Literally, we could not get a fork from plate to mouth without a dozen or so flies covering our utensil. They also snuffed out our campfire. We crawled into our sleeping bags, pulled in our heads and attempted to sleep. The stench was horrific. The next morning our campsite was about 6"-8" deep in dead flies. Fish flies are so bad that many riverside communities need to have their streets plowed of them. Bridges are closed, all city lights are unlit and life is hell for about three days. In fact, the density of these 24 hour living beasts is so great that they mess up air traffic control and can be seen on weather radar. The National Weather Service now issues fish fly warnings like they do hurricanes and tornados.

The endangered Wyoming toad needs a winter environment so they can hibernate, however, the warmer winters have wreaked havoc on their population. The National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium in Dubuque, Iowa, has found a wonderful solution compliments of APC, a livestock protein producer. APC donated a large refrigerator unit that can house over 600 tadpoles and juvenile toads for the winter. Since 2008 they have released 41,000 toads, that accounts for about 20% of the toads in the wild.

### Big River News

Noodling catfish is now legal in Wisconsin. Usually found only in the bayous of Louisiana or Mississippi, noodling is hand fishing. You get into muddy water and stir up everything to aggravate the catfish that then attack your hands and you simply grab them and fry them up. I'll bet it took a whole month of debate, discussion, committee meetings, analysis, application examination and more debate by the Wisconsin Senate to come up with this statewide, super meaningful legislation.

A long, long time ago in a land far, far away people wished to move goods via water because it was inexpensive. Unfortunately the mightiest of rivers fell significantly each

and every mile and were replete with rapids, rocks and currents. So they built locks and dams in order for the fine folks in Minneapolis to send flour and beer south and have grain and other goodies flow north. The northernmost lock and dam was at St Anthony Falls in the heart of the city. Downstream was another lock and dam called Lock and Dam #1 (note to Mississippi Bob, only in Minnesota would the second lock be labeled #1).

To make a boringly long story mercifully shorter, St Anthony Falls Lock was closed a few years ago as Minneapolis ceased doing business on Great Waters and to keep Asian carp from going farther north (damn illegal immigrants, those carp). Not to be outdone, St Paul wants to close the second lock (Lock #1) also known as the Ford Dam because it was next to the Ford truck plant (Ford Dam, Dan Rogers, NOT damn Ford). No, the lovely folks in St Paul want to close that one, too.

The primary issue is from boaters who like to use pleasure craft on the Mississippi but cannot get very far if the dam is damned. Specifically, the area from St Paul through the Ford Locks and up to the now dead St Anthony Falls dam is incredibly picturesque, featuring bald eagles nests, St Paul's High Bridge, Pig's Eye cave and the confluence of the Minnesota River with Old Missy. The boaters and fishermen want the Ford Dam left alone. Without the locks canoeists and kayakers need to make a one-and-a-half-mile portage.

The opposing side is American Rivers, an advocacy group desiring that the river be restored to the way it was before the dams were built. They correctly point out that the current ecology of the region is significantly different than Mother Nature intended and originally created and the cost of maintaining the dams is very expensive. American Rivers is a potent organization, especially in Minnesota.

The Corps of Engineers, who have to ultimately decide the issue, is under fire from both sides. My personal bias is to keep the Ford Dam operating. An urban cruise through this area is incredible. My daughter hired a paddle wheeler for a cruise along this part of the river for her wedding reception. Everyone loved the nature, the beauty and the history (well, the beer was pretty good, too).

Middle River Marine recently christened two new boats, *Gwyneth Anne* and the *Kamryn Olivia* at their facility in Joliet, Illinois. The former is 65' long with a 28' beam and 9' draft powered by a pair of 1325hp Cummins QSK-19-M diesels. The sister boat is slightly smaller and powered with Z-Drive QSK-38 diesels pushing a meager 2,000hp. MRM is a full service operation including barges, tows and repair. They removed the old Morton Salt building on Wacker Drive in Chicago, recycling 16,592 tons of material. In 2017 MRM used 1,563 barges for hauling and reduced truck congestion in Illinois by 90,168 semi trucks.

Master Marine, in Bayou la Batre, Alabama, is building a unique (for the US) type of ferry. This 18-car ferry will carry vehicles from Gee's Bend (also known as Boykin) to the county seat of Camden, Alabama. The exceptional thing is that the boat is all electric and it will be the first of its kind in America. In spite of owning a few shares of Exxon, I eagerly await the electric motor on our rivers and lakes.

Several wonderful rivers that make beautiful kayaking and canoeing run through the Driftless Zone. The Upper Iowa River meanders through the bluffs and palisades of what used to be the Great Hardwood Forest. Paddlers on the Turkey will see tons of bald eagles, especially where the Trout Hatchery runs into the river (it's also spectacular fishing there), an occasional beaver or even an otter, deer, turkey, pheasants and farmers (they are pretty wild up in that area, you can hear banjos playing in Clayton County). But one of the least traversed and possibly the most typical of Early America is the Yellow River that dumps into the Mississippi at Effigy Mounds National Monument and across from Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin.

Tribes that lived along the Mississippi thousands of years ago buried their dead in animal shaped mounds. In the 1920s and '30s Ellison Orr, an amateur archeologist from nearby Waukon, Iowa (my hometown) studied the mounds, hidden in undergrowth and trees, and some of the contents. His notes were the foundation for professional archeology and the government's declaring this a National Monument. It is spectacular and worth a trip to Middle America.

The Yellow River runs past the Mounds. Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, was established in 1685 on the Mississippi by the French traders doing business with mountain trappers in the Rockies some 1,000 miles away. Many decades later Fort Crawford was built there. One Commanding Officer of the Fort was Zachery Taylor (later becoming President). He firmly held his 16-year-old daughter away from his randy soldiers but she eventually was infatuated with Lt Jefferson Davis. To keep young Davis from his daughter, Taylor sent Davis up the Yellow to build and operate a sawmill. Love is eternal, Miss Taylor ran away when the Lieutenant received orders to go elsewhere. Mrs Jefferson Davis, of course, lived in the South when her husband was President of the Confederate States of America.

That story is almost enough to want to canoe the river, visit the Mounds, and see Fort Crawford, Villa Louis and the Medical Museum. Not bad for a town of 5,000 people. When you are at The Effigy Mounds Lookout Point on the Bluff overlooking the Yellow and Mississippi rivers, look across the Yellow to the bluff to the south. My family owns a plot on the top of the bluff. Unfortunately, there is no way to get to it!! I climbed it a few years ago. Now I am too old and decrepit. But the taxes are good, \$12 per year.



Messing About in Boats, January 2019 – 19

# 107-Year-Old Schooner Hauled Out in Gloucester, Massachusetts

By Bob Hicks



Might need a new transom?



Lining her up.



Silvina safely ashore, owner Harold Burnham checks her out.

When friend Capt Gnat called in October to tell me that they'd be hauling the dude schooner *Silvina W. Beal* out on the marine railway at the Gloucester Maritime Heritage Center, I made time to watch the event as I'm always impressed with how they move big boats ashore this way. I was not disappointed, a small crowd of true believers was on hand on a weekday to help in some cases, and to view in others such as I did.

The whole story about the *Beal* developed from this viewing and conversations with those involved as well as some research I did on the internet, if you can believe that. Here are a few photos I took to capture the haulout moment and then it's on to the story what's going on here.

It starts off with what the man behind it had to say in response to wild tales going around in Gloucester and Essex, Essex builder/designer of such vessels, Harold Burnham. Following this, we introduce Harold to those of you who are not already aware of him from our bygone coverage of his designing and building achievements. Finally we offer a look at the Gloucester Maritime Heritage Center where the 300 plus years' history of our oldest working fishing port is being gathered and presented to the interested public.



Home port for the winter



Mary Kay and I understand there have been a lot of rumors and lies flying around the Cape Ann waterfront regarding us and a certain fishing schooner up on the Maine coast, so we thought it might be time to set the record straight.

We are excited to announce that we are now the proud new stewards of the 1911 fishing schooner, the *Sylvina W. Beal*, and that we will be sailing her into her new homeport of Gloucester in October!

The *Sylvina W. Beal* was built in the Adams Yard in East Boothbay, Maine, in 1911. This yard later produced Gloucester's beloved racing fishing schooner *Elizabeth Howard*, "the white ghost of the north Atlantic." The *Beal* is an auxiliary knockabout fishing schooner almost 80' long, a little more than 17' wide and nearly 9' deep, she carries about 2,200sf of sail and about 100 hogsheads of fish.

Over the years since her construction, the *Beal* has proved to be a worthy vessel. After several years fishing, she eventually found a niche as a sardine carrier and was used in that trade for approximately 60 years before having her rig restored for use as a windjammer. In that form she has spent the past 38 years

When word came about the impending haulout of the Maine schooner *Sylvina W. Beal* on Maritime Gloucester's railway I took a look on the internet to see what I could find out about the vessel and found that the following tale (with a surprising twist at the end) was all there was:

"All proceeds from GoFundMe go directly to the restoration, care and educational use of the 1911 built schooner *Sylvina W. Beal* with intended use in her new home port of Nantucket, Massachusetts. This historic 84' schooner is one of three known knockabout schooners to have survived from the early 1900s. She sailed in the Boston Harbor Tall Ships Parade in 1992 and served as a movie set in "the Edge of Innocence" and "Amistad."

The other two knockabout schooners surviving are the old fishing schooner *Adventure* built in 1926, docked at the Maritime Museum in Gloucester, Massachusetts, and the famous Arctic explorer *Bowdoin*, first launched in 1921 now owned by the Maine Maritime Academy. As a knockabout schooner, a type of schooner without a bowsprit (a spar projecting forward from the bow of a vessel) the *Sylvina W. Beal* was built with long bow overhangs to allow easier handling at wharves and prevent loss of life at sea caused by men being washed off the bowsprit when furling heavy sails in bad weather.

## *Sylvina W. Beal* Comes to Maritime Gloucester An Open Letter from Harold Burnham and Mary Kay Taylor

sailing from Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine and as far away as Venezuela.

As it does, age has caught up to the *Beal* and this summer, as she was floating up in Bar Harbor, Maine, she was no longer to carry passengers. Understanding the *Beal*'s historic significance, and knowing of our ability to rehabilitate and make good use of these vessels, the *Beal*'s current owner nobly agreed to put her in our hands.

We have spent a week bringing her down to Gloucester, arriving at the Harriet Webster Pier at Maritime Gloucester on Saturday, October 13 at 12pm. In the coming weeks we hauled her on the historic marine railway at the Gloucester Maritime Heritage Center where she will serve as an exhibit and as part of their educational programming throughout the winter. With her safely on the rails, we will spend the winter removing the *Beal*'s ballast, engine, spars and whatever

else we can from her hull.

Concurrently, we will be documenting as much as we can about her history, starting the application for her well deserved place on the National Register and developing a written plan that preserves many of her historic characteristics and takes into account both her necessary rehabilitation and future use as a commercial passenger, sail training and research Gloucester Fishing Schooner.

When she leaves the rails at the Heritage Center we will bring her around to Essex where we will await the astronomical and meteorological conditions necessary to pull her up into our slip. It is our intent to complete the work on her hull some time after 2021.

As is exemplified by the Heritage Center's offer for use of the railway, and of our friends, family and community already pleading to help us with this endeavor, logs are arriving at the mill and once we get going we plan on involving as many people with this work as we can. It is our hope that, like the other vessels we have built and worked on, the *Sylvina W. Beal* will help keep our maritime heritage and culture alive and present on Cape Ann and make us all the richer for it.

## Earlier Funding Effort

By Bob Hicks

McManus in Essex, Massachusetts, first used this design in 1901 when designing the schooner *Helen B. Thomas*. This design replaced the prominent bowsprits called "Widow Makers," was fast and very seaworthy. The *Sylvina W. Beal* was built in East Boothbay Harbor, Maine, in 1911 at the Frank J. Adams Yard. She was built for Charles H. Beal of Beals Island and named for his wife Sylvina W. (Alley) Beal. Launched as a fast cargo carrier in the import export trade, she carried cargo all up and down the east coast from Nova Scotia to New York.

As the pride of Beals Island, she also was used as an international seafood carrier until she was converted to a windjammer passenger schooner in 1981. She has sailed from Canada to South America and has worked windjammer charter in Maine, Massachusetts and Connecticut. We intend to bring her to Nantucket and make the island her permanent home port, sailing her daily on windjammer cruises and staging educational programs for Nantucket's own students and visiting students. A schooner of this historical significance has not called Nantucket home for quite some time and we intend to give every Nantucket student an original sailing

experience. As owner, Captain Kent Murphy finds himself charged with the great honor of restoring and being her next steward on her journey in history.

The *Sylvina W. Beal* is in rough shape now. Her hull and rigging are strong but her cabins, deck and systems are in disrepair being out of the water on the hard in Maine for better than four years. She has sailed to Nantucket previously and sailed from here in 1992 in a horrific fog to a triumphant reunion with the people of Beals Island. Any and all donations and assistance would be greatly appreciated to bring this historic vessel back to life and return her to her original condition solidifying her place in our maritime history."

**Only \$500 of \$250,000 Goal Raised**  
By Four People in 37 Months  
Created October 20, 2015



Harold Burnham bears a family name that is virtually synonymous with Essex, the birthplace of approximately 4,000 schooners. He is the 28th Burnham to operate a shipyard in Essex since 1819. Growing up in a family of shipbuilders and a town where shipbuilding is a tradition handed down over the generations, Harold has learned the standards of the past and traditional techniques. He has carved out a place in history as a master boat designer, shipwright and sail maker. Like his ancestors before him, Harold has a holistic approach to vessel design, construction and operation which makes him uniquely efficient. In addition to holding a bachelor's degree in maritime transportation and fisheries from the Massachusetts Maritime Academy, Harold draws upon extensive experience at sea and of course, techniques learned in the famous shipyards of Essex. In 2012 he received a National Heritage Fellowship in recognition of his work. Harold comments further as follows:

"Given the relatively small population of Essex, Massachusetts (averaging about 1500) and the number of vessels built here (estimated at 4,000) over nearly 400 years, it is hard to imagine a place on earth where shipbuilding is more deeply embroidered into the fabric of a community. For this, I credit the great deal of support I have received over the years as well as many of the skills that were handed down to me. I have also been

With a river basin view that mesmerizes, out of towners might miss the tree trunks stacked along the street by Harold Burnham's shipyard. But locals see these mounds of mostly white oak for what they are, the building blocks of the Massachusetts shipwright's dreams.

This is the raw stuff that makes its way from the street to the sea, helping Burnham keep afloat a wooden boat building culture in a town known for constructing more two masted wooden fishing schooners than anywhere else in the world.

Many see the 45-year-old Burnham as a master of a dying art. The Essex born shipwright uses locally harvested wood and hand tools to build schooners at Burnham Boat Building with a modern adaptation of the same techniques builders used on this waterfront land in Colonial times.

Burnham captured recognition in 2012 by winning one of nine \$25,000 heritage fellowships the National Endowment for the Arts awards annually. The prize is meant to pay tribute to his craftsmanship and mission

The Burnham yard fall of 2010 with *Ardelle* in frame and the *Lewis B. Story* in the creek at the left.



## So, Who is Harold Burnham?



"He's the real thing. He's the classic new England Yankee. He's independent, he's determined and he works around all the challenges that come up in boat building. I'm as interested in the culture of what he's doing as I am in the craft of what he's doing." (Barry O'Brien, as quoted in *The Boston Globe*, August 2011)

blessed and inspired by my family who kept the yard and allow me to live and build boats here much like a family farmer who keeps up the family farm.

## Shipwright Builds on Past to Save Maritime Future



Harold accepts his National Endowment for the Arts Award with his son and daughter.

to preserve a part of American culture for future generations.

"This craft is so tied to place, in a way it's reconnected a town with its shipbuilding heritage that's sort of been lost," said Maggie Holtzberg, who manages the folk arts and heritage

Through the seasons when I am not sailing my own vessels I cut logs on my mill, dry the timber, design the vessels from half models in the traditional way, loft them, make the molds and patterns, build the hulls, spars, rig and sails, install the mechanical and electrical systems and fit the vessels out ready for use. And through the process I have developed a talented group of friends who share in my passion and can help me. I know of no other place where so much is done in the boat building process right from the raw materials. It is truly organic. We even fasten our boats with wood.

Although we have not produced large numbers of vessels, our vessels have proved to be quite successful for the purpose intended. Some have even paid for themselves many times over. This is something I credit to both my skill as a mariner for knowing what the vessels would need and to the vessels owners who often times participated in the vessels construction and did what they had to do after the boats were sailing.

Wooden boats may not be for everyone and not everyone can build them. However, there is nothing like a wooden boat and there are occasions when wood just makes sense. During those occasions it should be known that we can still build wooden vessels in an economical and efficient manner and that our boats will last for generations."

program for Massachusetts Cultural Council.

Burnham is the 28th member of his extended family to run a shipyard in Essex since the town incorporated in 1819, a tradition he can trace back 11 generations on the same land.

"It's as if he was born to do this," said Molly Bolster, who runs the New Hampshire maritime nonprofit Gundalow Company.

Burnham sees wooden boat building not as family history but as a local culture he helps perpetuate with local resources. Any wood that doesn't go toward boat construction fuels stoves that heat the yard's lofting shop and the house on the same land where Burnham lives with his family.

The father of two went to school at Massachusetts Maritime Academy, working as a merchant mariner on commercial ships and building wooden boats when he was onshore, before giving his current occupation a go full time in the 1990s.

He got a boost in 1996 when he was hired to build a 65' vessel. Then 29 years old, Burnham built *Thomas E. Lannon*, which nowadays takes schoolchildren on sailing charters out of the fishing town of Gloucester.

Burnham counts each of his six schooners as a triumph and credits his community for helping him preserve his town's maritime culture. He said his pursuit is really about keeping the art form going with the hope it won't end with him.

"It's been extremely difficult to have even built six," Burnham said. "But what I'm proud of, they all worked and they've been extremely well loved and taken care of by their owners."

Friends pitch in during construction phases and thousands of locals show up when a craft creaks its way down greased slabs to splash into the water for the first time.

"He's not afraid to call his boats beautiful, because it's not just his work," said Tom Ellis, who commissioned *Thomas E. Lannon*. "It's the community's and everyone who came before him."

Burnham mills the wood he uses at the shipyard, preparing piles for the next schooner order he's always hoping will come in. When one does, Burnham designs, engineers and constructs the vessel before he and his team launch it into the creek just off the Essex River.

In 2011 he tried something new by building a boat for himself. The shipwright said he was going slowly broke at the time but friends, family and community members kicked in materials and labor to get the 45-ton vessel built. Now Burnham's captaining that 58' schooner *Ardelle* on summer



*Ardelle* under construction outdoors in the winter of 2010-2011.

charters from a dock at the Gloucester Maritime Heritage Center.

"With every boat, his reputation builds and it's not just that he's a throwback to the

olden days," said Justin Demetri, a historian at Essex Shipbuilding Museum across the creek from Burnham's shipyard. "One man is almost encapsulating my whole museum."

## The Essex Side Launch

Harold's schooner *Ardelle* was launched using the Essex side launch technique on July 9, 2011 (a video can be viewed on the *Ardelle* website). Additionally, Harold has launched three other large vessels in the Essex side launch style. This story is from *WoodenBoat* magazine, written by Harold after he successfully launched the *Lewis H. Story*.

In the 19th century, when the Essex, Massachusetts yards were at the height of their production, there were only three basic ingredients to a launching, grease, gravity and momentum. Grease was the slippery stuff the vessels moved on, gravity was the motivator and momentum was the safety net that kept them from fetching up in their journey to the water.

Back then there were too many vessels being built to give each one a lot of launching hoopla. Builders just used the simplest method they could to get the finished boat out of the way of the one they were about to start. The most popular method in Essex was called a side launch. Side launches were carried out by just leaning the vessels over onto a single way and skating them into the water on their own keels and one bilge.

Of course, in today's world the idea of sending a hundred tons of oak sliding on one side over smoking grease sounds dangerous, but that is only because we don't do it much anymore. Just imagine the looks you would get from a 19th century shipbuilder if you tried to explain to him what it is like to pass a car on an undivided highway. The truth is that of the approximately 3,300 vessels launched in Essex, we know of none that was seriously damaged in a launching accident. Further, there is no record of anyone being seriously hurt or killed at one of our launchings either.

The way a side launch is executed is as follows. First, the vessel is leaned over so that



*Ardelle* hits the Essex River on her side in the Burnham Launch, summer of 2011.

her bilge rests on a short plank and wedges which will ride on the one groundway down into the water. Then a number of greased slabs (the barked edges of logs that are discarded when squaring off timber) are wedged up under the vessel's keel in the spaces between the blocking she was built on. Finally, as the tide rises, starting aft, the vessel's blocking is split out from under her keel. When enough of her weight rests on the greased slabs, the gravity pulling her down overcomes the friction holding her back. It is hard to guess which block will start her. Sometimes it takes a little jacking and jerking to get the vessel going, but once she starts things get really interesting.

The bilge way is generally built at a somewhat steeper angle than the grade of the keel's path so that as the vessel slides aft she also leans over onto her side. There is a rea-

son for doing this. The general theory is that as the vessel enters the water the buoyancy of her quarters will tend to lift her and carry her through the shallow water near the riverbanks. If she were upright on a cradle, on the other hand, she would tend to stick her keel into the mud. Once she is overboard, an added advantage of the side launch over the cradle launch is that there is very little trash to fish out of the water.

Exactly who developed this method of launching is lost to history, but it is almost unquestionable that the draft restrictions of the Essex River spawned its use. Likewise, it was probably the horrendous angle of the vessels as they entered the water that limited the adoption of the side launching technique despite the fact that it was far easier and less expensive than a cradle launch.

As launchings became more and more infrequent, they went from being regular occurrences to exciting events. People came from miles around to watch. It is amazing how some people find mystery in the most basic of arts, and I am sure that many builders were entertained by the aura of uncertainty they created. I have heard educated people who witnessed the old launchings comment, "You never knew what was going to happen." My five-year-old son can tell you what will happen if you put enough grease and paraffin under a heavy object on a hill, and that is exactly what I planned to do with the *Thomas E. Lannon*.

When my friend Tom Ellis asked in 1996 if I could design and build him a 65' schooner for the next charter season (see *WB* No 143), I didn't really answer him. I simply told him that it used to take an experienced builder only four months to build one. I then went on to say that I figured by learning and using the old methods of doing things, I would probably be able to build his schooner as quickly as it could be built. Luckily, Tom only hears what he wants to. After I said "four months to build one," he missed the rest of the conversation and hired me without a second thought.

Throughout most of the *Lannon's* construction, I was terrified. I had so much on my shoulders and so little firsthand experience to rest it on. My father's advice was that although knowledge based on one's own experience can only be linear, knowledge based on others' is exponential. So much of what I fell back on to build the *Lannon* was the experience of the Essex builders who came before me. As most of them were dead, this was a challenging aspect of the job. Thanks to a number of photographers, historians and shipwrights, I am able to give as much credit for the *Lannon's* remarkable construction and good looks to the old Essex techniques as I do to my own ingenuity.

Of all the Essex shipbuilding methods I learned, none intrigued me more than the side launch. Throughout the winter, when I was working out the details of the *Lannon's* construction, I would occasionally take breaks to study the launchings and dream of the day when I would get a crack at it. Unfortunately, as the day approached, Tom Ellis admitted he was having some dreams of a different nature about the "Burnham launching technique."

Several years before Tom had the unfortunate experience of being the star witness to an almost unbelievable incident at a local boatyard. As he described it, he was paddling by in his kayak when the yard was getting ready to launch a powerboat they had just rebuilt. Tom looked up to see the vessel skid off its cradle and fall with a bang onto greased groundways. Luckily, the groundways held and the boat continued its descent without the cradle. Sure enough, the boat's momentum carried it miraculously unharmed through a seawall and into the water.

In spite of the old phrase "all's well that ends well," no amount of explaining to Tom how a side launch works and the fact there would be no cradle at the *Lannon's* launching could do anything to calm his nerves. What made matters worse was showing him pictures of some beautifully executed side launches, as this only intensified his nightmares.

What eventually happened was that between Tom's nightmares, some commitments I had made to my family and an unfavorable tide, I begrudgingly consented to let my rite of passage fall into the hands

of a local genius who I knew, by reputation alone, was deserving of the honor. Ironically, this man Tom chose in order to avoid the "Burnham launch" was none other than the legendary Francis Burnham. Francis gave Tom exactly what he asked for. Tom said he did not want the vessel traditionally launched, but simply lowered in a very controlled manner. Lowering seems to be about the most apt way to describe the anti-climactic way in which Francis brought an end to a most remarkable construction.

As I mentioned earlier, the old Essex launchings had only three basic elements, grease, gravity and momentum. However, by their very nature there is a fourth element, complete lack of control. From the moment the vessel starts until her drag brings her to a stop, there isn't anything anyone can do but wait and watch. If her builder has laid a proper path, she will follow it, otherwise her momentum will probably carry her. And if it doesn't, she can always be jacked up to wait for the next tide.

What was funniest about the *Lannon's* lowering was that, although Francis never let the *Lannon* out of his control, no one ever had any control over Francis. On the appointed "day of the launch," Francis showed up, lowered the boat a few inches and left leaving 4,000 people wondering what he would do next. It was both horrible and hysterical and I could do nothing but laugh over the fact that Tom had hired the only person in the world who could drive him crazier than I could.

Over a week's time, Francis and his crew accomplished in a most controlled manner (using steel, hydraulic jacks, welders, a crane, a bulldozer and a barge) what generations of shipbuilders had done thousands of times in just hours using nothing more than some grease and a few wedges. As if to add insult to injury, because of the great delays in the lowering, I missed opportunity to watch the tide lift the *Lannon* clear of the bottom.

I would be a liar if I said I wasn't disheartened by the whole scenario. On the other hand, I would have been a fool not to realize that the great opportunities the *Lannon* provided far outweighed the minor incidents surrounding its launching. I know that with the *Lannon* success I would get another chance at launching and within months of her completion I had a contract for another vessel.

This contract became the Chebacco boat *Lewis H. Story*, which I designed and built for the Essex Shipbuilding Museum. Although the *Story* is much smaller than the *Lannon*, she is of similar construction (being built with sawn frames and trunnel fastenings) and she has an equally interesting Essex lineage. Once again, I hired my friend Erik Ronnberg, Jr, to help me with the research and, once again, my friend Lew Joslyn documented the project with photographs. Outside of Erik I used only volunteer help. Some of these individuals were among the best people I ever worked with. Their enthusiasm was great fuel for my ambition, and in the process of having a good time we built ourselves a pretty nice boat.

We laid the keel on the first of February and got her framed, planked and caulked by mid May. In spite of the fits and starts of the funding, and with the help of friends and family, on September 25, 1998, the *Lewis H. Story's* newly painted hull was ready for launching.

All was ready to go. We had finished setting up the bilge rail and the slabs just moments before. Margaret Story had done a

fine job of christening. The crowd was relatively small compared to the thousands who gathered to watch the *Lannon* 13 months earlier. However, no one had any doubts that something would happen this day.

Thinking back, it is almost as if I am there. Whack! I was splitting the forward-most block out from under her and all of her weight was about to fall on the grease. Whack! A thousand second thoughts were racing through my mind, but it was time for action and I tried not to listen. Whack! The block came out and there she sat.

You could have heard a pin drop and all eyes were on me. I put my hands on her stem to give her a shove (as if my meager 170 pounds could make a difference) and as I touched her she started. Before I could put my weight into it she was off moving faster and faster and faster. With a splash, her stern dipped and her bow lifted and she was afloat. Then SNAP! the drag took up just as I had planned it, and a 12"x16"x8' oak timber followed her down end over end, stopping her just alongside our float on the opposite bank.

Even though the *Story* was a comparatively small boat, it was a pretty cool sight and without question a highlight of my career. The crowd went wild and I must admit I felt like a baseball player who had just driven in a three run homer in the top of the ninth to clinch the World Series. I felt lucky beyond imagination! Further, I was really grateful to everyone who helped put me where I was. Not the least of these folks was Tom Ellis. He was the coach who put his career and his whole life on the line to drag me up out of the minor leagues. What's more, he knew better than I did that I would not disappoint him.

In spite of this, I had to laugh at some people's comments, "What the hell was Tom Ellis thinking?" "Why didn't you launch the *Lannon* that way?" These questions echoed for days and although I never asked Tom, he gave the answer the next time I saw him out on the *Lannon*, "I don't know what I was thinking of, Harold. You couldn't hurt this boat even if you tried."

Tom summed up the underlying secret behind all of our launchings. Our vessels are built to take the worst that God and the North Atlantic can throw at them. If we could destroy one by sliding it down a mud bank, you wouldn't want to go to sea in it.

I would like to give the *Story* family my sincere thanks for being mentors and friends. "First, it should be noted that all of the older vessels pictured in this article (originally in *WoodenBoat* - Ed.) were built by A.D. Story, who employed a number of my ancestors in their construction. Secondly, all of these photographs and much of the technical and historical information in this article was provided by A.D. Story's son Dana. Dana has always been a great source of both inspiration and information in most of my shipbuilding endeavors. Finally, I would also like to thank Brad Story, Dana's son, who showed me by quietly going to work each day that I could make a living building wooden boats in spite of what the world was telling me.



# The Gloucester Maritime Heritage Center

## A Community Vision

In 2000 Geoffrey Richon organized nearly 300 Cape Ann residents to create a nonprofit organization and invest in the purchase of a neglected industrial property overlooking Gloucester Harbor. The one acre site included the oldest continuously operated marine railway in the country plus an assortment of industrial buildings. Relying on volunteer labor, an active board and private contributions, the railway was restored, the site cleaned up and plans designed to transform the site into a working waterfront museum, a maritime heritage center and an educational facility. Through the vision and hardwork of the community, the Board and the leadership of Harriet Webster, the founding Executive Director, the following transformation took place during the last decade:

The icehouse was converted into a multiuse boat building house and physical science teaching center.

Where the building that housed the condensers for the icehouse stood, the Sarah Fraser Robbins Education Center now stands.

The once rundown office building has become the visitor center, gift store and interactive Stellwagen exhibit.

Open space between our property and a neighboring building was turned into the Sea Pocket Lab featuring nine touch tank aquariums celebrating the habitats and the marine animals of Cape Ann.

A major expansion tied three existing buildings together and added a new second story that now features the Gorton's Seafood Gallery and exhibit space.

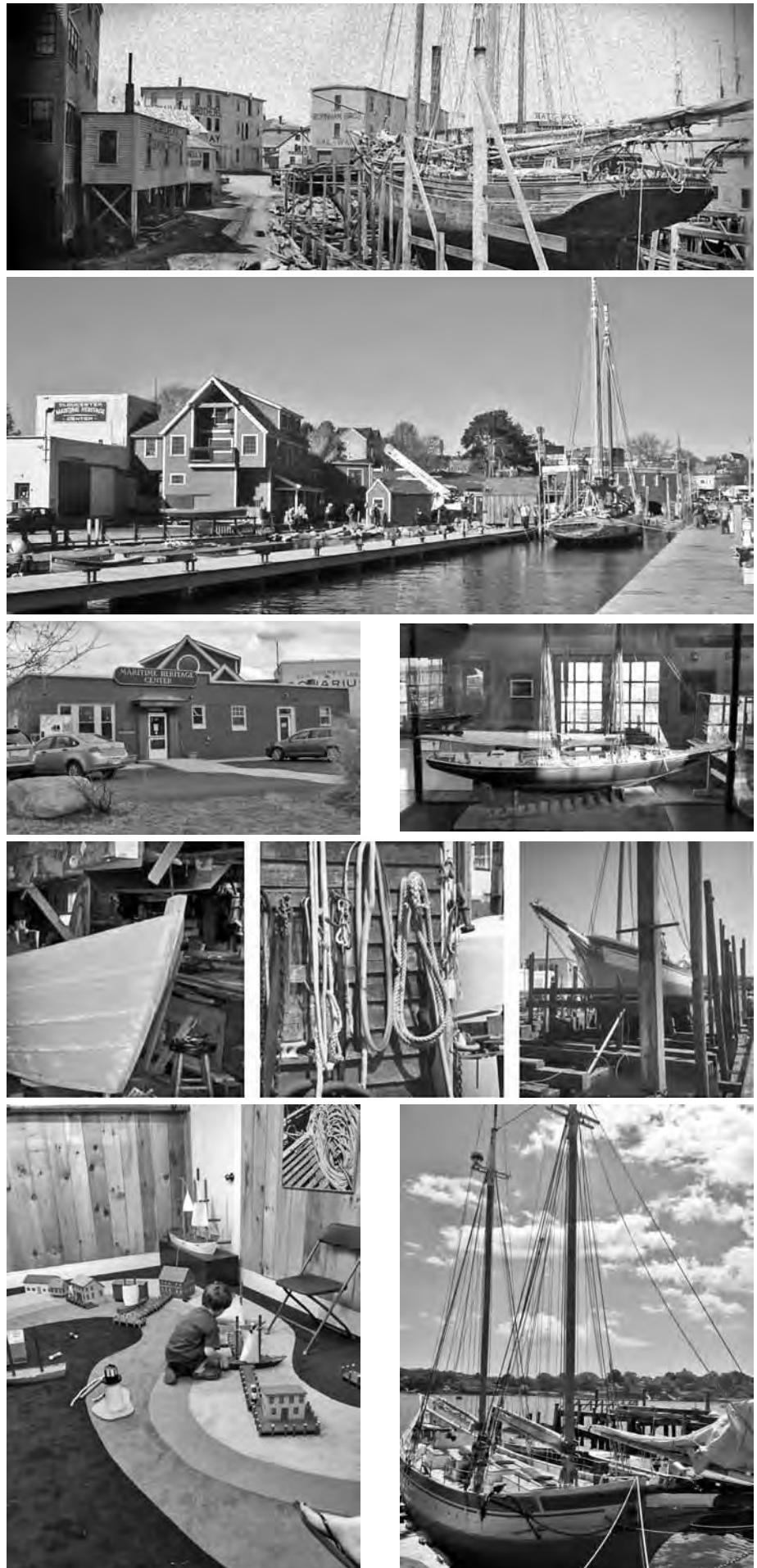
The pier has been fully restored and is the largest publicly accessible wharf in Gloucester Harbor.

A Boat Shop was created and a new seasonal aquarium was built.

Maritime Gloucester has been celebrating the history of our maritime culture for over 15 years, teaching and inspiring environmental stewardship for the next generation, focusing on marine science and maritime heritage. Each year more than 5,000 students and educators visit Maritime Gloucester, taking part in educational programming and historical maritime activities on our working waterfront, in our Sea Pocket Aquarium and learning classrooms. The ocean covers 70% of the Earth's surface and is the home of the majority of Earth's living creatures. These young stewards of our oceans will be leaders for tomorrow's challenges in protecting our natural world.

Visitors from near and far visit Maritime Gloucester to learn about the oldest seaport in America and our living shorelines. This past year over 60,000 visitors came to our exhibits, walked the Harriet Webster Pier and sailed aboard the *Ardelle*. Our seasonal classes, workshops and lectures continue throughout the change of seasons, making us a full season resource in our community.

Maritime Gloucester, 23 Harbor Loop, Gloucester MA 01930, [maritimegloucester.org](http://maritimegloucester.org)





Honorah before...



...and after.

Tumlaren, the Swedish sloop.



### Lake One Design #416

34'x23'4"x7'9"x5'3"

Racing One Design Sloop, 1937



This design was selected in a competition sponsored by the Lake Yacht Racing Association in 1937 for class competition in the Great Lakes, including distance racing in exposed water. The Lake One Design was sweet and fast but also strongly built with offshore features including a self bailing cockpit, a bridge deck and powerful auxiliary. She had rudimentary accommodations for three (lacking full standing headroom and unenclosed head). Lake Ones were built at many yards and spread from the Great

## Buffalo Maritime Center Projects Update

By Greg Grundtisch

The *Honorah* is finished. Well, sorta. It has been about ten months of steady work by Maritime Center member volunteers to get this restoration complete. Now she is getting ready to be placed on a trailer and taken to have the engine evaluated and repaired, if needed. Then she will be covered for winter and stored until next spring. She will then be put up for sale, that is, unless a buyer can be found before that. *Honorah* is a Phil Rhodes 34 Lake One design. You can find information and photos of this at [SailboatData.com](http://SailboatData.com) or just search Lake One design.

*Tumlaren*, a sloop built in 1935, is being restored by members of the Maritime Center. This is a 20 square meter (sail) racing cruiser at 27.5' length, 6.5' beam, a crazy tall mast, almost twice the length of the boat, and narrow sail rig. "Tumlaren was once the most advanced type of cruiser in the world," according to Uffa Fox, a notable racer and sailboat developer and designer. Search *Tumlaren* for photos and details of this remarkably tall sail rig designed by Sweden's Knud Riener.

The *Buffalo Wailer* is moving steadily along with Richard Wiesen leading a dedicated group of BMC members. This is to be a lighter and trailerable version (interpretation) of the Center's flagship *Scajaquada*, a Lake Erie Boat, or shallop once used for commercial fishing on Lake Erie.

Also ongoing is the sloop of war replica *Trippie* of Commodore Perry's War of 1812 fleet, with John Lloyd heading up this build with other members.

As always, people are welcome to stop in and see for themselves what is going on at the Center. Or there is always something to do if you care to volunteer with one or more of these projects, as well as others. They have just recently begun a boat museum at the Center as well as other ongoing building and maintenance tasks and check out their website, too: [BuffaloMaritimeCenter.org](http://BuffaloMaritimeCenter.org).



The *Buffalo Wailer*.



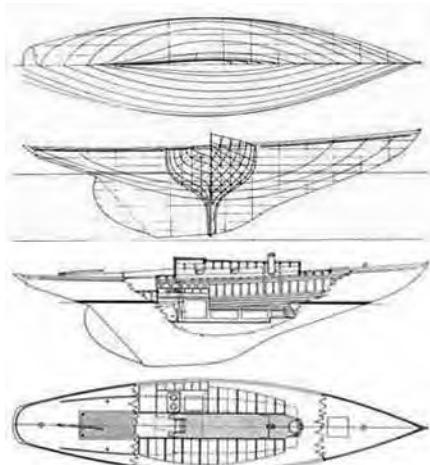
The *USS Trippe*.

What the *Trippie* will look like when she is completed, gotta way to go.



USS TRIPPE  
Line art by Alan Armento  
Buffalo Maritime Center 2019

Lakes to the Chesapeake and elsewhere. The photo is of *Brolga*. She was built in Australia in 1955 by Griffin Boat Builder and has a long and successful racing career. Contact: [dbjames@live.com.au](mailto:dbjames@live.com.au).



### Tumlaren



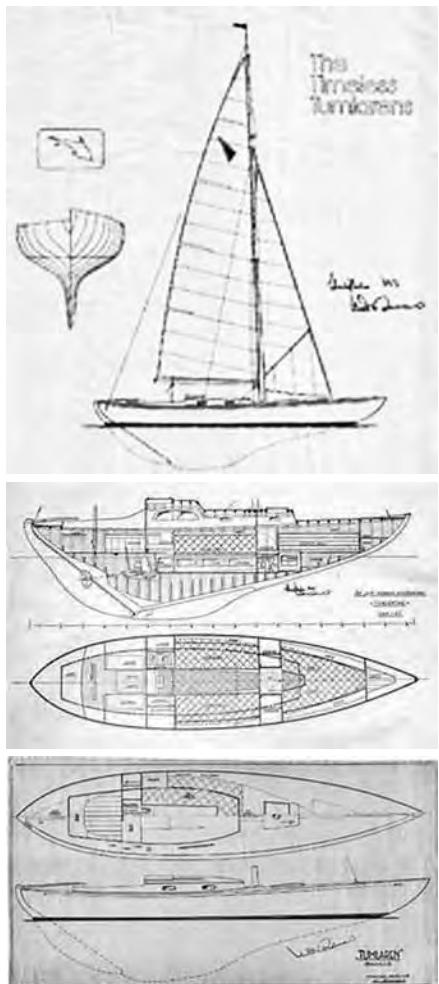
The "Tumlaren was once the most advanced type of cruiser in the world," Uffa Fox! Designed by Knud H. Reimers in an attempt to marry the characteristics of long and narrow with those of the faster Square Meter Yachts that were so popular in Scandinavia during the 1930s. Over 600 are said to have been built.

The yacht has a sharp bow and rounded stern that founded the British expression Tumlaren stern. She has an aft cockpit with

just enough room to hold a helmsman. The main sheet is attached to a traveler on a wooden strongback that separates the aft cockpit from the main cockpit. The interior accommodation is very spartan with full length settee berths port and starboard and a V berth forward of the mast. This allows her to sleep four but this is very cramped with today's measurements of yachts. Aft the port bunk is normally equipped with a small alcohol stove and storage lockers. Additional storage lockers are found to starboard.

Knud Reimer's Tumlaren can today be found on all the world's continents and in at least 24 countries. In Australia they became a one design racing class and the building and measurements were adopted to locally available wood types. Today Tumlaren are very sought after classic yachts and prices vary from a couple of \$100USD for renovation projects to \$30,000+USD for examples in top condition.

Newly built Tumlaren are still available and among others there is a Finnish company named M-Yachts who still builds them in wood.



#### Specifications:

Rig: Bermudan Sloop  
LOA m/ft: 8.3m/27'2"  
LOD m/ft: 8.3/27'2"  
LWL m/ft: 6.65m/21'8"  
Beam m/ft: 1.93m/6'5"  
Draft m/ft: 1.27m/4'2"  
Sail Area: 20sq.m

Construction: Designed on diagonals, the sections are cut squarely, a technique that makes it easier for the boat builder to do the laying down and fairing up.

## Buffalo Wailer

The new *Buffalo Wailer* is a 20' version of the Lake Erie shallop, based upon those seaworthy work boats unique to western New York, and is being built as a program boat by Buffalo Maritime Center volunteers and a generous donor who wished to remain anonymous. The *Wailer* is being built using composite construction strip planking that will be sheathed in fiberglass cloth. The rugged construction includes two watertight chambers and other built in safety elements. It is thought that she will be a relatively fast boat that will "wail" along in a breeze.

With a crew of two adults, the boat will take up to six young people for overnight camping cruising trips around Lakes Erie and Ontario. The kids will learn to row, sail and manage basic seamanship as they make do with a minimum of modern conveniences during their weekend voyage of discovery.

The Lake Erie shallop was the local boat most commonly used for commercial fishing on Lake Erie prior to the turn of the last century. Generally running upwards of 30', the original boats were capable sailboats when managed by fishermen who knew the rough waters at the eastern end of the Lake.

The *Scajaquada*, a Lake Erie shallop replica built by the Buffalo Maritime Center in 2007, is docked at the Commercial Slip at Canalside and is available for free sails Tuesday and Wednesday evenings during the summer.



## USS Trippe

### General Characteristics

Type: Sloop  
Displacement: 60 Long Tons  
Propulsion: Sail  
Complement 35 Officers and Enlisted Men  
Armament: 1 x 32-Pounder Long Gun



*USS Trippe* was a sloop in the United States Navy during the War of 1812. She was named for John Trippe. Originally named *Contractor*, she was purchased by the Navy on the Niagara River in New York in 1812, was converted to a warship by Henry Eck-

ford of New York, renamed *Trippe* and placed in commission soon thereafter, Lieutenant Thomas Holdup Stevens in command.

For a while *Trippe* and her sister ships, fitted out on the Niagara River, were bottled up by British shore batteries at Fort George. However, Commodore Isaac Chauncey's squadron joined the troops under Colonel Winfield Scott in a combined attack upon the fort and it fell on May 27, 1813. The fall of Fort George forced the British to evacuate Fort Erie as well. With the river open, Chauncey's ships began passage of the Niagara rapids on June 6, 1813, and, on the 19th joined Oliver Hazard Perry's fleet at Erie, Pennsylvania.

*Trippe* and the rest of Perry's squadron remained at Erie for another month. At first, the need for additional men to complete its crews kept the fleet in port. Later, a British blockade restricted its movement. However, the British were not exceedingly vigilant and, on August 4, *Trippe* and the other ships crossed the bar to leave Erie harbor. They remained near Erie until the 12th when they set sail for the western end of Lake Erie.

Perry established his operating base in Put-In-Bay at South Bass Island. That location afforded him excellent lines of communications with American forces to the south and put him within easy striking distance of Commodore Robert Barclay's British fleet, based just inside the mouth of the Detroit River at Amherstburg.

For over a month, the British ships remained at their base under the protection of heavy shore batteries. However, Barclay had to order his ships out of the river in order that supplies might be delivered to British troops operating near the Detroit River. They weighed anchor on September 9 and departed Amherstburg. At sunrise the following morning, American lookouts sang out, "Sail ho." Perry's ships, including *Trippe*, cleared for action and headed out in the line of battle with flagship *Lawrence* in the lead. Though they outnumbered the British nine ships to six, the Americans were outgunned 54 to 63.

By midday the two forces opened fire. The British concentrated on the lead American ships *Lawrence*, *Caledonia* and *Niagara*. Meanwhile *Trippe*, stationed near the rear of the American force, fought a long range duel with *Lady Prevost* and *Little Belt*, battering *Lady Prevost* severely. The British captain and her first lieutenant received serious wounds and she herself, reduced to an unmanageable wreck, fell off to leeward.

Perry's flagship suffered similar damage but he moved his flag to *Niagara* and ordered his ships forward through the enemy line. *Trippe* charged ahead, firing furiously. The British resisted the American onslaught heroically but one by one they struck their colors. When *Chippewa* and *Little Belt* attempted to flee, *Trippe* and *Scorpion* overhauled them and herded them back to their defeated fleet.

The Battle of Lake Erie, *Trippe*'s only action in the War of 1812, assured American control of Lake Erie and enabled American troops led by General William Henry Harrison to win a decisive victory in the Battle of the Thames. Throughout the remainder of her career, *Trippe* carried supplies to support General Harrison's land operations. In October the British attacked Buffalo at the east end of the lake and forced the Americans to evacuate the city. They found *Trippe* aground near Buffalo Creek and set fire to her. She and her cargo of supplies burned completely.



## 25 Years Ago in MAIB

With the exception of having to lug all the stuff of living and building a home and a boat across the state, I have never regretted our having moved from Nashville to Lenoir City, Tennessee. Honey misses the bright lights and social happenings of our state's capital. But life and business in the mountains of East Tennessee are the greatest as are the people to be found here.

To me this is an ideal community for us to raise our daughter Anna. The people that one can meet here are by and large the most kind and understanding people on the planet. Just mention to one of them that you are building a boat and they are quite likely to break into a warm smile. And some of the older, more experienced of the folks around will break into a broad grin, or even a belly laugh.

The belly laugh most often comes from the wives of these my fellow "Riverine Sportsmen". Tom, an avid duck hunter and fisherman, told me that one time he had built "a Duck Boat, kinda like a sneak box but more boxy and not quite so low in the water."

His wife snickered, "It was beautiful until it blew out of the pickup on the first day of duck season."

And there's Oscar who has been building a canoe in his basement workshop since 1967.

"How come it has taken you so long?" I asked him.

"Ya' see, shortly after I got the building jig and all of the molds set up, I fell upon two great concepts. First is that while I had my tools out the kids couldn't be allowed in. Second is that while I was building my wife couldn't use my tool space for storage."

"Third, he can never get the damn thing out of the basement." His wife chimed in.

"Yeah, but I can still escape from my kids."

"Those are your grandkids, dear."

Bill, on the other hand found an old barge, and converted it into a lovely sternwheel houseboat. I've only met Bill once. He and his wife are living out their retirement on the river.

One of the first people that I had the fortune of meeting in Lenoir City was Jack

## Instant Indeed! Or More Adventures in Instant Boatbuilding

By Robert B. Hoge

Hardin, Jack works for the State Department of Motor Vehicles, but also owns a small sawmill which he operates as a hobby. As a matter of fact, I have watched Jack do a lot of sawing, particularly after a tornado went through town, but I have never known him to sell a stick of wood. I think that he just likes to crank up the old 1940 vintage John Deere kerosene engine just to hear the booming sound of the two big 9 inch pistons. Jack's youngest son, Wes, a skilled carpenter and cabinet maker probably gets the most benefit out of the mill.

I met Jack at the Masonic Lodge in Lenoir City and we immediately became fast friends. It did not take long into our knowing each other that Jack learned that I was building a boat.

"What kind of a boat?" Jack asked.

"A 26 and a half foot long by 4 foot wide version of a 1920's era cigarette race boat."

"Ya' make her out of fiberglass, or wood?"

"Fiberglass over mahogany plywood, this is an "Instant Boat"."

Jack was so intrigued with the concept of an "Instant Boat" that he took pity on me and has allowed me the use of one of the outbuildings on his farm.

"Sure, you can set up shop in the old corn crib."

"Great, will there be any problem out there?"

"No," Jack drawled, "Just clean you out a spot and make yourself 'ta home."

Another great set of friends whom I met in Lenoir City are George and Ida Mae DeWolf. George (whom I guess to be in his late seventies) was born and raised on Narragansett Bay, and is quite a sailor. When he was a boy George owned a

Herreshoff 12-1/2. George claims to have had "Cap'n Nat" himself join him on the shakedown voyage of his 12-1/2.

The DeWolfs have allowed me to moor my sailboat at their dock on Tellico Lake for the summer. This arrangement has not only allowed me to get several mornings out sailing, it allowed me to use the sailboat trailer to move my "Instant Boat" project to the corn crib from Nashville. The trailer on which the "Bullywooger" rested was a homemade affair, and was not yet roadworthy. Therefore my sailboat trailer would have to haul the "Bullywooger" to its final building site.

Jack's old corn crib had a good roof on it, and the doors on both east and west ends of the building had long since fallen, but there was a space, about 30' x 12', for the finishing of my four year "Instant Boat". To either side of this center space were two long "cribs", formerly assigned for the storage of corn, one corner of which was to become mine for the storage and setup of my finger removers and other tools and supplies needed for the completion of the "Bullywooger".

As disused barns and sheds will do this building had collected well over a century's worth of broken farm implements, used up tools, bicycles, well pumps, and scrap lumber. It took nearly a week of cleaning, hauling, and burning to ready the place for the boat. And it was all less than a mile from Fort Loudon Lake. At the corn crib you can even hear the signal horn on the lock usher passing craft through its gates.

Next there was the minor hassle of having electricity run out to the corn crib. While I am a past master in making do with "Slobbovian Engineering" there are some things which government electrical inspectors insist on being done correctly. Ten feet of one inch galvanized water pipe will never pass as a ground rod. Eight feet of solid 3/4 inch galvanized rod is the specification, so another week passed before I was able to steal the time needed for the return to Nashville to fetch the "Bullywooger".

My old diesel pickup truck had reached the end of her useful life span so I replaced it with an A.M.C. Eagle SX/4, a

sporty 4x4 which looks rather like a Ford Pinto on steroids. I chose this auto because one of my employees owned a station wagon version of this model and was most pleased with its performance towing her pontoon boat. Other factors were the condition of the vehicle (excellent, nearly mint condition), and the price (\$500 above what I got for the pickup). As I read the specs in the owner's manual I saw that the little beast was rated for towing up to 3500 lbs. or four times the weight of the "Bullywooger", and a thousand pounds more than the weight of our sail boat. In addition to all of the above there was the simple fact that this little 4x4 was quite unique. So unique that I had only seen two or three of them. In fact it was so darn unique that according to the dealership only a couple of thousand of the SX/4 were ever made. This car was so confounded unique that the only hope for having a trailer hitch installed was to have one custom made. In my mind's eye I saw a cartoon money bag with wings flying away.

Therefore, armed with my trusty pencil, square, measuring sticks, etc., I went to the auto parts stores in the area to make a nuisance of myself. I would make the doggone thing myself out of pieces/parts rather than pay the two hundred plus for a custom job. In the end I found a unit rated for 5,000 lbs. at Walmart of all places. The hitch was supposed to fit a gargantuan Ford F-350 Pick-up but I figured that with a little shortening of the cross piece, and relocating a couple of holes it would fit. Much to Honey's amazement (and a small amount of awe of my own) the thing did fit, and with only a slight rerouting of the exhaust system, and a half day of swearing at the drill as I crawled around under the car punching holes in the frame.

Even more my new rig towed the empty trailer to Nashville effortlessly.

On my arrival in Nashville I found the "Bullywooger" sitting in the garage on its trailer just as I had left it. But now came the problem of transferring it to the sailboat trailer. The sailboat is 21' long, and the "Bullywooger" is 26-1/2', so I pulled the two trailers out into the driveway side by side and pondered such things as gross weights, centers of gravity, tongue weights, bunk and hull support placement, while my mother plied me with coffee, sandwiches, gossip, and advice. The coffee and sandwiches were excellent.

In the end I jacked up the trailer and moved the axle back on the frame as far as it would go and lowered all of the supports as far as they would go. The sailboat trailer, a Dilly (brand) does have a nice feature in that there is a pin about half way down the tongue which allows the aft end of the trailer to be pivoted downward for shallow water launching. While I have only used this feature once before, this time I was counting on the ability to lower one end so that I could start the "Bullywooger" onto the first roller without having to physically lift the boat up onto it. I pulled the pin and heaved up on the tongue. When had tried this operation before, the trailer had easily bowed down, but now, with the wheels so far aft, I was forced to use a hydraulic jack to overcome the weight shift.

Aligning the two trailers nose to tail I began to winch the boat onto the new

trailer. Slowly the "Bullywooger" began to slide forward as the tension built on the nylon winch rope only to stop at the second roller. I pulled. I hoisted. I heaved. Finally I wedged my 76 year old mother into the transom to counter the weight of the bow. Crawling under the trailers on my back and pushing upward with my legs. The bow inched over the second roller, and the elastic qualities of the nylon winch rope snapped the boat forward to the third roller. Mom enjoyed the ride.

I spent the rest of that afternoon and into the evening jacking the supports into place and loading wood, parts, fiberglass, resins, paint and tools into the hull.

The trip back to East Tennessee went well. I did notice that I was turning a lot of heads as we rolled down I-40, and after the umptieth explanation on the CB radio of what I was hauling I turned the radio off. Jack suggested that I use some of the lumber from one of the numerous piles in the barnyard to rebuild the doors before winter, but I told him that that this was "An Instant Boat", and that I should be out of the crib before winter set in.

Jack and I glued, screwed and fiber-glassed the outer keel in place, and I laid the "last" of the glass on the hull this past fall. I was in a dead heat run to get the boat sanded, and painted before winter, but the cold came early to the mountains.

Bureaucrats: There are those here in Loudon County, as everywhere, who by profession are required to be bureaucratic nitpickers and nitwits. In all fairness I must say that such people around here tend to be so involved only for eight hours of the day, and then mostly by reason of their job descriptions. The prime example of this type can be found most often at the Court House.

Following what I thought were standard procedures, I sent a form to the "Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency" to register the "Bullywooger" and be assigned our TN number for the bow. The form came back by return mail along with a form letter which explained that the registration had been denied because I had not had the County Court Clerk "validate" it.

"I've never had to have my registration validated for my other boat," I told the bureaucrat in Nashville, via long distance.

"Well, this is a new registration, and the County has to verify that all applicable sales taxes have been paid."

"But what taxes? I built it myself."

"Well, just tell the court clerk, and he will stamp the form and endorse it."

My trek to the Loudon County Court House was to be a real eye-opener.

"Hi! I'd like to register my boat."

"Oh! OK!"

The girl at the desk handed me the same orange form that the State had just sent back to me. I filled out the form and offered it back to the girl.

"Oh! OK! I don't need that, just send it to the State."

"This is a new registration. I'll need to have the form 'validated'."

"Oh! OK! I'll just need to see your bill of sale so that you can pay me the sales tax."

"Well, you see, there is no bill of sale for the boat, I am only just finishing it. I built it myself." I said proudly.

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A look of panic stole across her face. It seems that I had presented her with something that she hadn't a form for. "Oh! OK! Just declare a value on the boat and I'll just tax you on that."

Now a look of panic stole across my face. "But Ma'am, I have built this boat over the last four years, a board here and a can of paint there. I paid sales taxes on everything when I bought it, and I don't think I owe anything more."

"Oh! OK! So how much would the boat be worth if you were to sell it today?"

With some quick mental arithmetic I figured eight percent of the eight hundred some odd dollars I had tied up was about sixty some odd dollars more than I had in my pocket. Tax on the ten thousand dollar price tag that might convince me to part with the boat was about what I had in the boat to begin with.

"That would be double taxation, and a violation of my 'Constitutional Rights'!"

Now the look of panic stole across the counter to her side. The various government agencies had provided numerous blank forms and headaches that go along with the mere mention of "Violating a person's Constitutional Rights". And here was a pure blooded Scotsman about to declare "Minority Status".

"OooH! Okay!... Couldn't you just give me a figure if you were to sell the boat to yourself."

"To myself the boat's only worth a

dollar."

"Oh... They won't buy that, a twenty six footer's gotta be worth a couple of thousand... OK!"

"I don't even know for sure that it will float."

"OK! Look, it's close to closing time. Why don't you call the "TWRA" and see what they do in a case like this. Oh!"

I returned to the car feeling like becoming a real "tax rebel". I'd find some cheap tin skiff, register it and use those numbers. "Sure," Honey suggested, " or you could just paint it camouflage and only go out at night."

I couldn't even wait to get home to the telephone. I stopped at my store on the way and called the TWRA. "Well, if you don't have all of the retail receipts, just give them an affidavit that all parts were purchased at retail and that taxes were paid at that time. They will enter the affidavit as a bill of sale with a zero amount."

The following afternoon I entered the Loudon County Court Clerk's Office prepared to do battle with the man himself. Happily, I didn't see the same girl at the counter.

"Hi! I need to register my boat." The lady offered me yet another orange form, but I gave her the one I had filled out the day before along with my notarized affidavit."

"So, you built the boat yourself?" the lady asked as she initialed my forms and worked her rubber stamps. "You're not the

fellow who's building a boat over in Jack Hardin's old corn crib are you?"

"Why, yes I am."

As it turned out, the lady lives just down the road from Jack's, and she and her husband had been curious about what sort of project was shaping up in the old corn crib. Living in a small community does have some advantages at times.

I did not waste all of the winter months merely making a living and dealing with bureaucrats. While the partners thought that I was busy building new shelves and displays for our store I was also able to finish fabricating the floorboards, seats, cockpit coaming and windshield.

I used 3/4" cypress fence boards for the seats and floorboards. I had a large stack of the stuff rotting in mother's back yard, and with a some care in picking I was able to select eighteen or twenty of the 6' pieces. Milling the rough edges brought the width down to just less than 5". I had to sand the daylights out of the tops of this punky stuff, but I left the underside of these pieces alone. Had I sanded both sides the thickness of the boards would have been less than 1/2". The varnish will seal it anyway.

For the dashboard I used some choice 7/8 walnut that I had saved from a previous project. The end result of the dash was quite pleasing if I do say so myself.

(To be Continued)

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As the reader might recall from my earlier writing I had some difficulty in finding an engine for the "Bullywooger". My brother-in-law had given me a 40 horse brute which Phil Bolger advised strongly against my using. I considered adding the extra depth to the keel and fins or throttle stops that Phil had suggested, but considering the precious cargo that the "Bullywooger" would carry my quest for a more appropriate engine continued.

I went to several of the boat dealers in the vicinity and was quite disappointed. Most of these "merchants" couldn't be convinced that a 15 to 25 horse short shaft engine with remote controls and electric start was being made, and if such had been available it would be a royal pain for them to order one. It mattered little to one particular OMC dealer in Knoxville that I could show him the engine I wanted in his catalogue. In fact he became insulted when I pointed out to him that the price which he finally quoted for a 25 was the same as he had on a new 40 horse Johnson which was sitting on the showroom floor.

"See," he said "Ya' want a 40 for a 26 foot boat anyway. A 25 won't push such a big boat."

"But it is only four feet wide and it should only weigh around 800 pounds including the engine."

"Look, I been doin' bidnezz in boats for mor'n twenty years and I ain't never heard of no boat that wuz 26 foot long and only four foot wide."

"I built this boat, and the designer said absolutely no more than a 25, and he has been in this business for around forty years."

"Are you trying to tell me how to run my bidnezz?"

"No, I am telling you what I wanted to buy from you. It is in the catalogue, but I will not pay enough for a 40 when all I want is a 25."

"Well then, how much do you think that this 25 that you want custom built should cost."

I walked over to a long shaft, electric start 25 with tiller steering, looked at the price tag, and offered him that price plus \$250 to cover the cost of the controls. I'll grant that my offer was almost a thousand under his "price", but his response terminated any hope of our ever doing any "bidnezz" together.

The Mercury dealer said he rarely sold just a motor. "Wouldn't you like a nice boat to go with it?"

"I have the boat, I built it myself."

"What!" he gasped in horror, "Are you trying to kill yourself? Boats have to be carefully engineered and tested."

"It was designed by one of the most respected men in the field who has well over 500 (600 now! Congratulations, Phil) different designs to his credit, and I daresay that thousands of his boats have been built."

"OK, so what do you want a 70, 90, or a 125?"

"Just a 25 short shaft with remote controls, and electric starting."

"Look, I been doin' bidnezz in boats for mor'n twenty years and I ain't never heard of no boat that wuz 26 foot long and only needed a 25."

The price he quoted was much more reasonable than the OMC dealer's, but still

## There Ain't No Such Thing Anymore! (A Fourth Great Lie?)

### Or More Adventures in Instant Boatbuilding

By Robert B. Hoge

it was close to the down payment on the house that Honey has her eye on.

So much for buying a new outboard. My quest continued in the used market.

As this was a modern rendition of an antique concept, I set my sights on finding as old an engine as I could. I had visions of finding an old "knuckle buster" like the old Johnson "Sea Horse 22" that my grandfather use to have. Something so old and neat that it would have the gas tank on top and no cowling. But on investigation I found that such antiques were either still buried in garages and barns or were restored museum pieces with prices close to that of the Hope Diamond. Whenever I did find a vintage engine from the 50's or 60's there was invariably boat attached to it. I thought that I might buy one of these "package" deals and slip my brother-in-law's 40 on the transom, sell that "package" and make a small profit.

I broached this idea with Anna and Honey one morning as we were eating breakfast. The baby thought that it was a grand idea and gleefully sprayed oatmeal across the table.

"Bo...! Bot!... Boat!"

Honey on the other hand allowed her practical side to rise once again to the occasion.

"And just where the heck are you going to keep this boat till you sell it? Your sailboat fills up the driveway, your speedboat project has filled all of the space that you dare to borrow from Jack, and the partners will ... (do nasty things) if you try to turn the store into a used boat yard."

Each Sunday I would scan the Knoxville paper classified ads but I could never find a good used outboard. I ran after several wild geese, put a lot of miles on the car and spent a lot of time that could have been better used working on the boat or in my store. Finally near the end of March I picked up a tabloid called the "Bargain Mart Classifieds" which one of my employees had left at the store. I turned to the "Boating Section" and there it was.

"1957 18 horse Johnson, runs good, \$350....". The telephone number indicated that the seller lived about 70 miles away, but I gave him a call.

I spoke with the fellow's wife, who really didn't know much about the motor, but she said that she would gladly meet me at their home on Douglas Lake in the morning.

I arrived at their house on a crisp spring morning. The lady showed me down to the dock where the motor was. I had been expecting to find the motor to be a

basket case consigned to a dark corner of the boat house, but I was soon to see that this was not to be the case. Outwardly the outboard appeared to be nearly new, not more than a few years old, but the model and serial numbers proved that it had been made 36 years ago! I have seen a lot of old outboards lately but this one looked great as it sat clamped to the stern of an old 16 foot fiberglass skiff. I gave the motor a good looking at, and even pulled the plugs and checked the compression (100 and 102 psi cold!). The wiring and plugs appeared to be brand new, a fact which the lady confirmed. The magneto, points, plugs, all wires etc., had just been changed, the motor thoroughly tuned and a brand new impeller had been installed in the pump. The lady even had the bill from the shop where the work had been done. The total on the shop bill was nearly half the asking price!

Checking further I saw that in those days outboards were built for both tiller control and remote control with no modification needed. Both sets of controls could be used alternately or simultaneously. This could open up whole new worlds to Honey's concept of back seat driving! All clamps, cranks, pins, and gizmos were in place and I just had to connect the control cables that came with my brother-in-law's old forty for a complete installation.

We slid the skiff into the lake so that I could test the engine. I primed the carb with a couple of pushes on the pump and detected no apparent leaks. I set the choke and pulled the rope. After my fifth pull the lady remarked that her husband had never had to pull more than twice to get it going. I checked and sure enough I had left the shift lever in reverse. With this problem corrected the engine burst to life on my next pull. Looking over the transom I saw that the water pump was working and plenty of cooling water was flowing out through the exhaust. I revved it up a time or two, fiddled with the mixture controls, shifted the gears, and after a couple of minutes I shut the motor down.

The lady suggested that I take the boat out across the lake to see if it was working OK, so I slipped on a PFD and again cranked up the motor. I headed out across the lake gently at first, and then I opened it up. Wow! This was better than I expected.

Roughly comparing the performance of this motor on a heavy fiberglass skiff, with the almost new 20 horse Mercury and light aluminum semi-vee that I had rented at the local marina last spring, I soon realized that they sure don't make 'em like they used to!

I came back to the dock and gave the lady \$350 and she gave me a bill of sale. I had my outboard.

### Final Assembly

The saturday before Easter, 1993, was the first time that I had had in oh so long to work on the boat. This spring was one of the weirdest and wettest of recent memory. Right as the winter weather started to break, there came a tornado which blasted through our town (you might have seen it, it made CNN). The tornado came within a thousand feet of the corn crib, but as luck would have it, we suffered no damage other than the loosening of a tarp. Two week-

ends after that was the "Blizzard of '93". Twenty-three inches of snow will cool the building fever.

The steering gear for the boat was salvaged from a 16 or 18 footer that came to grief when it slipped off of its trailer along I-24 in Nashville. This gizmo was one of the newfangled "push-pull" affairs. The length of the cable was just about right, but with the beam of the "Bullywooger" being only four feet, the bends required behind the dashboard and at the transom were far too sharp for the cable.

I searched for another steering head, but this time I decided to get one of the old style "drum" steering heads, run cables and set pulleys to do the work. Once again I found exactly what I wanted in the catalogue. Unfortunately this was my father's 1959 Perko catalogue, and I soon found that such really were not available except in salvage. I had cast around at many of the boat dealers and marinas in Nashville looking for a "drum steerer", but I never really found a "boneyard" where salvage needs such as mine were considered.

Near to Lenoir City is Kingston, there I found a different OMC dealer with a different sort of an attitude. The salvage was permitted, but his price was still way too high. All of this set me back to thinking about the push-pull system.

How does it work? I considered. There is a rack and pinion gear in the head which is connected to one end of the "push-pull" cable. The sheath over the cable was fastened to the tube that housed the gear. When the wheel was turned the gear caused the rack to move the cable inside of the sheath.

The solution came when I uncoupled the "push-pull" cable and left it in Nashville. I then devised a way of attaching the steering cable to each end of the rack gear. All that was required for this was that I enlarge a hole in the end of the housing to permit the cable with a clamp to

pass in and out of the gear case instead of the "push-pull". I had wondered if I would have enough throw at the engine, but reasoned that the gear was now pull-pulling over the same range of motion as it had been push-pulling, so all should be right.

I had a beautiful morning working under the long deck assembling the steering gear. All of the pieces, parts and cobbled portions began to meld quickly into place. When came to the point of positioning the pulleys (I know I should say sheaves) behind the dashboard I came to realize that alignment was going to be a problem. The tiller cable had to run straight into the rack gear case to avoid chafing. To gain that straight run I would have either had to purchase two more pulleys or scrap the "Push-Pull" which I had converted into a "Pull-Pull".

In the final installation I made a drum to fit over the pinion gear and ended up with a much smoother working system over all.

For a steering wheel I had a choice. I could have used the white plastic wheel which had been attached to the steering head when I got it, but chose instead to use a classic spoked wheel which Dad and I had planned for another boat.

Wes Hardin came by the project to help me hang the engine. As we got the clamp centered on the transom for a first fitting Wes noticed that the jaws on the clamp would open only about an inch and 3/4. The transom naturally was two and 1/8 inches. There was no problem with the clamp, that's just all that it will open up to. In frustration I grabbed up the drill and chucked a disk of #36 grit paper in it and ground away at my beautiful laminated transom enough to slip the motor on figuring to dress up the job when I next got out the fiberglass (for the fourth and final last time).

I spent two mornings of precious stolen time routing a half inch from the inner face of the transom and inlaying an

eighth inch of aluminum plate to reinforce what I had to grind away from the transom.

#### The Last Step (a Fifth Great Lie?)

The day before Mother's Day, 1993, was a red letter day in the construction of the "Bullywooger". On May 9, the boat was completely assembled. Paint, and varnish were the last step.

The last step before installing the lights, before finishing the trailer (scratch that one, I'll use the sailboat trailer for the first season). The last step before upholstering the seats. The last step before bedding in the new transom plate. Etc.,etc., etc... .

With the boat fully assembled I sat in the cockpit for close to an hour before I began to take it all apart. Yes, it was quite a dream session, and the seat back will never do as it is now. That seat is both aesthetically and functionally uncomfortable.

I was able to get three-fourths of the paint on the hull before the pace of my fireworks business began to demand all of my time. So as my third Fourth of July in Lenoir City approached, with only one coat of bottom paint left to apply to the port half of the hull, I had to cover up the "Bullywooger" and snug the tarps down for two weeks. There was no severe weather coming, just the busiest time of the year for my business. I just couldn't afford to leave the store 'til after the Fourth. Like a farmer with his fields ripe I could ill afford to think of anything 'til after "harvest".

Honey was a good sport about being a business widow for those two weeks. Then one evening as I left to go to the store I asked her when supper would be ready. She looked up from her quilting and with the most serious deadpan expression on her face replied, "After the Fourth".

Ah! But after the Fourth I have only the cockpit coamings to install and the bright work to varnish. And of course there is also the conclusion of this trilogy to finish for the gentle reader.



"Bob's Law of Paint": The color of the paint which you have just applied is always on the opposite side of the spectrum from the bug that just landed in it.

The painting of the "Bullywooger" went about as I had expected that it would. From the outset I had intended to paint the hull gloss black, and leave the rest bright to show off the fine grain in the cheap lauan plywood which I had used. Gloss black is one of the toughest paints to use in that every imperfection in the surface will show. As this had been my first real attempt at fiberglassing there were numerous minor sags in the resin, so I approached the finishing part of the building with trepidation.

Most of the sags sanded off easily enough. In the end I probably should have applied one more coat of resin to fill in between the sags, but I had decided to use one of the wonder goop "Epoxy Undercoaters", which a magazine article and the catalogue said could also be used as a fairing compound. What the Epoxy Undercoater couldn't hide I would fill with glazing putty.

The undercoater went on with little difficulty filling some of the sags, but it left a lot to be desired in the way of being a fairing compound. As the boat sat on its side with the soft white of the undercoater gleaming I was sorely tempted to buy a quart or two of semi-gloss white and just strike the waterline and sheer trim with the black. But I had suffered far too many dreams and visions of the "Bullywooger" being black and mahogany as had been its namesake. Anyway the black paint was paid for.

The glazing went on next leaving the "Bullywooger" smooth, but covered with rusty brown spots and splotches. Now I HAD to paint it black.

Opening the can of "EasyPox" gloss black was a revelation. I had in years past worked as the manager of a photography lab, so I thought I knew what black was. It was pitch black in the film processing room. The oil in Honey's car was black, but when I opened that paint can I found a

# It Ain't Finished 'Til It's Floating!

## Or More Adventures in Instant Boatbuilding.

By Robert B. Hoge

whole new definition of black. This was "BBBBLLLAAAACCCKKKKK!" Void black! Black hole black! Glistening creamy black so deep I had to hold on to the edge of my workbench to keep from being sucked into it. I applied the stuff using the roller and brush method as described on the back of the can. I was amazed at how easily and completely it covered the white, and how smoothly and evenly it dried, and how many blessed white insects and honeysuckle flowers could be sucked into it.

The second coat went on even better than the first. One large reason for the success of the second coat was that I had to leave the corncrib as soon as I had cleaned the brushes. I didn't have the luxury of watching the bugs flounder in the paint as it dried. When I returned the next day I found that about the same number of insects had accumulated, but that most of them left smaller fingerprints than I did. I soaked a clean rag in mineral spirits and wiped them away, shearing their little legs off. In most of the places beneath where wings and such had been plastered down the paint was yet uncured. The mineral spirits not only cleaned away the bugs, it helped the paint to flow out, skin over and heal the bug prints.

I guesstimated where the waterline should go, figuring that should I be way off I could use inch and a half boot top tape and would have at least three inches of fudge factor. I snapped a chalk line along the plumb sides, and after considerable

dusting, cussing, and wiping away the excess chalk, stretched on the masking tape. As usual in my instant boat building the budget was tight so I agonized over what to use for bottom paint.

In several back issues of "Messing About In Boats" and other publications I had read where many builders have forsaken the expensive concoctions and are painting their boats using such as floor and porch enamel. I even read somewhere that H.H. Payson had taken to using latex house paint. Well, this boat is not going to sit in the water for any great period of time, so an antifouling paint "per se" wasn't needed, but the idea of using latex was more than I could handle.

In my experience latex almost always sloughs off in great sheets of funky semi-rubber (repaint ye thinners !!!). At least when oil paints come off they tend to come off in much smaller flakes.

Both at my store and in Anna's nursery I have used a lot of "Red Devil" oil based polyurethane paint, and I was most pleased with the results. And since the store had a quart of the "Chinese Red" on hand I figured that I would do a little experiment. I used the "Red Devil" and was thrilled with the results. The "Red Devil" is not nearly as forgiving of brush marks as is the "EasyPox", and if you leave a sag or somehow apply it too thickly it will wrinkle and take forever to cure. If you try to sand one of these uncured puddles the paint will lift and leave a sharply defined crater, but where it has a chance to cure it is quite solid.

The "Chinese Red" collected cyan colored bugs of a type which has the Entomology Dept. at the University of Tennessee quite baffled.

After two coats of black "EasyPox" on the topsides, and two coats of "Red Devil" on the bottom, I rolled the boat over and did the other side. The port side of the boat was much easier to prepare than the starboard. Throughout the building of this boat I have found that the port was always easier, smoother, better aligned, or more quickly accomplished than was the starboard. I figure that the reason for this is the fact that both in the garage in Nashville and in the corncrib in Lenoir City I could never see the port side of the boat. The door, the tool bench, etc., were always on the starboard. Whenever I started some new step or phase in the building I would begin on the starboard, make my mistakes, learn, and do it right on the port. Also, the difficulty I had in worming my way over to the port side required that I think ahead.

With two weeks to go before the "Fourth Of July" I closed up the corn crib and snugged down the tarps while I weathered through the fireworks season.

The weekend following the "Fourth" I unwrapped the tarps and finished the bottom painting.

With the "Bullywooger" finally resting on its bottom, I declared the hull "Finished", and on the 15th of July began to install the cockpit and mechanicals. One of the hardest parts of this restart was basic logistics. While I was painting I had stashed most of the boxes of screws, drill bits, countersinks and the like.



And then there was the question of seating and other accommodations. For seating, Phil had shown one simple-bench seat, the passenger seat back was to fold forward to permit easy entry in to the front. Also Phil had designed floor boards for the aft. More than one visitor to the project suggested that folding chairs be used for additional passengers. But the idea of aluminum chairs in a hull patterned after the 1908 Hickman speedboats "Viper" and "Viper II", styled after the "Cigarette Boats" of the "Twenties", built by a fool in his "Forties", and powered with an engine from the "Fifties", was just too much to consider. I decided to see what else I could do with the cypress fence boards that I had left.

In my disappointing first attempt I had tried to duplicate Phil's concept, but the seat backs were too high and too far back to feel comfortable while I was seated at the controls. The idea of folding chairs or just the folding part continued to intrigue me. What about a folding wooden seat that could be opened to become a sun lounge? Many modern boats have back to back seating that folds as such, but in the narrow confines of a four foot beam, seats such as these would be rather hard to step over.

I searched patio and garden shops to see what neat "funny-foldies" were out there whose designs could be adapted. At one store in particular I found a seat wonderfully hand crafted out of the richest teak that I have ever seen. My tape measure indicated that the size was perfect down to a 16th of an inch. I had only to saw the legs off, drop it into the boat, and screw it to the risers. However after paying \$275 for a piece of furniture I could not accept the idea of sawing the legs off (anyway, it did not fold, even though it was gorgeous). We left it in the shop where we found it, and my design hunt continued.

William Dade Jackson, that dominant designer of homebuilts of the Fifties, came to my rescue out of a 1940's "How to Build Twenty Boat". The design "Shore Lark", which was repeated and updated in several later editions, showed a simple seat which folded back on a bolt pivot. "Shore Lark" had two sets of seats and a rear bench for the Skipper. I would have no rear bench but I figured that if the front seat were fixed, and the rear seat were removable I could fold down the backs and move the rear up to join the front. The result of which was that I would have a sun worshipper's altar which could open up to about 4 by 6 feet. Made of the same stuff as the floor boards the match was perfect.

Now the again fully assembled boat had to be taken apart for yet another "Final Step". The finishing of all that cheap lauan mahogany plywood. If you have ever wondered why men over the ages have called boats "SHE", it has to be because building them can be a test of how many times you can be teased with their good looks before you finally get her "in the water" (so to speak).

All that mahogany to varnish! The deck which Phil Bolger had designed for this boat was to be of 1/4 inch plywood which would be painted, but the design had been updated to show the installation of a half inch "laid" deck. I attempted to install the deck as a single, then as a double sheet

of plywood, but the crown of the deck at the bow had far too much of a bend. I could ill afford to install a teak deck or one made of a wood that would do justice to the rest of my efforts. Then Phil came to my rescue with the design of a pulling boat with enough multiple "chines" so that the angles disappeared and smooth curves appeared. A cross between multi-chine and strip-built!

I ripped the lauan plywood for the deck into one and a half inch strips, (this is what I was doing when I cut the tip off of my finger) and simply laid the deck twice with a slathering of "Weldwood" between the strips. It was so easy but the curve at the bow was still acute enough to require a carved filler piece at the very breast of the boat. Still this was not enough to keep me from exposing more than one layer of veneer when I fairied the thing out. Were I to build the boat again I would make the deck with two diagonal layers and one fore and aft layer of 1/8 inch door skin cut in one inch strips. This method would likely be even stronger and lighter (I would also use a push stick when ripping out the plywood strips).

Anyway, in fairing it all out I spoiled the effect of a laid deck (sorry, Phil). Still I thought that I could get away with an odd patch as such. But when I looked at the deck, covered with a layer of glass, a coat or two of resin, and with the cleats, chocks, and running lights set in place, I decided to just go ahead and paint the deck. There would still be plenty of varnishing to do and mahogany to see in the windshield and cockpit.

After several pondering sessions and mindless hours of contemplation while I sanded, I settled on yellow as the color for the deck. I looked in both of the two marine catalogues which I normally get to order more of the "EasyPoxy", but the ubiquitous "EasyPoxy" ad was not to be found. I called them. They were sold out. I searched the local marine shops.

"I send all my paint bidnezz to Peck's Auto Paint and Body Shop' up da' road. He does great work on Corvettes too," was the consistent reply. But Peck (that must be short for Peckerwood) only sells the paint he applies when he applies it.

Finally one of the local "chandlers" found some "EasyPoxy" at a company out of Florida. It cost me twice as much and took twice as long to get here as had the paint from the regular catalogue.

It seems that the "EasyPoxy" is one of those great products soon to be banned owing to the environmental effects of its solvents. I suppose that before long we will all be using latex or some other water based paint, but for the moment I had all the paint that I would need for this boat. Well, this is what I thought till I went to the local Walmart and tried to purchase just one more quart of the "Red Devil" for some touch-up (and to replace the store's can). The shelf was bare. Only half pints were available, and the sticker on the shelf marked the lot of it as "Non Replenishable Stock"! Curse the E.P.A. anyway !!! This happens every time I fall in love!

On August 19th, I applied the first coat of the "EasyPoxy Sunflower Yellow", and in one ambitious day's effort I was also able to seal the coaming and windshield with two coats of polyester. The following

day I sanded it all down.

It was a slow grind through the remainder of the month of August. Sand. Varnish. Wait a day. Sand. Varnish. Wait. But a good finish cannot be made over night, or if you scrimp on the coats. After the first few coats of varnish my main goal was to build depth in the finish, so I hung the windshield, and cockpit coamings in the rafters of the corn crib and was able to varnish both sides of things in a session.

Wes came by one morning and we roughly assembled the port half of the coaming and windshield. Then from a box I produced a set of freshly polished antique bronze running lights, cleats, chocks, and other hardware and placed them around the deck. The gleaming metal artifacts, which I had been saving for so these many years, were from my father's sloop. Dad had never installed the running lights on the sloop because they were for a motor boat in the next size class up. Well! Guess what I had built, and guess how good it all looked.

That dreaming session concluded, I hung the parts back up for yet another few coats of varnish. In the meantime I collected a few more brass screws, and got the control cables for our "new" antique engine.

The cables for the "Brother-in-law 40" were four and a half feet too short to do the job. I could not find a set to fit the old style 1957 cable brackets. One wise old chandler told me that in the merry days of 1957, the adjusters were the same, only made out of brass and were thus smaller. He suggested I delve into his bone yard. If I found a set I could have them. Have them for only ten dollars. Each. I scrounged through the boneyard but found nothing salvageable. I went back to the corn crib to study the situation.

Heck, if the only difference was the brackets, I had only to swap the brackets from the old '57 engine with those on the '72. In the end the two cables cost but \$15.99. Each. On the other hand they are brand new and should give us long service.

Another small step was to find a place to mount the beautiful antique brass stern light. The light itself sits on a small streamlined base. The base had to be horizontal, and the only space which was close to being a horizontal surface in the stern was in the floor of the slop well. I gathered about me an array of odd scraps and pieces-parts to figure out a short deck abaft of the rear seat.

After finding just the right sized scrap of lauan, several odd lengths of half round (left over from the sailboat's rub rail), and a handful of odd blocks, I was finished with construction.

Labor Day was spent with a sander in the morning, varnish and paint brushes in the afternoon in a frenzy of finishing. I ran out of time before I had a chance to get both sides of the windshield and coamings varnished with their final coats, and it took a third coat of the "Sunflower Yellow" the following day before I was satisfied with the deck.

The weekend following Labor Day I glued the last pieces of the boat in place, and made final the installation of the engine and controls.

In digging out the rub rails from the "good wood" pile, I found that one of the long pieces of oak had cracked so badly

that I would have to remake them. Oh well! At least the wood hadn't cost me anything. I had salvaged that particular stick ten years ago from an old window sill.

Jack gave me permission to select a piece of white oak from one of his saw mill piles, but as soon as my plane bit into the piece which I had chosen I discovered that I had grabbed a piece of poplar by mistake. I was scratching my head over my goof-up when Jack came sauntering down to the corn crib with a lovely clear piece of quarter sawn, well seasoned white oak fourteen inches wide, two inches thick and fourteen feet long. It was perfect!

Now, the boat was fully assembled, painted, varnished, bedded, and strung. Jack and I loaded the "Bullywooger" onto the sailboat trailer in time for Honey and Anna to take Daddy on our annual week long pilgrimage to Florida. Part of me cried that this five year project needed only a vacuum cleaner and a tank of gas to be finished.

Launching dates had come, and launching dates had gone. July 7th, July 31st, August 9th, August 15th, September 1st, Labor Day, they all passed. My friends stopped believing them and I stopped worrying about them. In Florida I waded the surf with Anna and I found myself really thinking about launching dates in earnest. I knew that I would have the boat in the water in time for the fall colors, and before the T.V.A. drew the lakes down to winter pool level. "Heck," I reasoned. "If I was into INSTANT GRATIFICATION I wouldn't have built an INSTANT BOAT in the first place." But then the morning after we returned from Florida I woke up and realized, "Hey! Today's the day."

I rushed down to the corn crib, rolled out the "Bullywooger" for the first time and began vacuuming. Then the friends started to arrive. One, by one they came and went, eight in all.

"Wow Robert!"

"So that is the boat!"

I was so proud. I greeted and passed a very pleasant time with all of them.

"When 'ya gonna launch it?"

I couldn't bear to tell them that my vacation would be over at 3:00 pm and that the only thing keeping me from launching was all the pleasant conversation.

Shortly after noon I had all of sawdust out and all of the equipment loaded into the boat. There were still some small details but I knew that if I hung around the corn crib another minute someone else would pop by and I would be off on another ego trip. I decided then to haul the trailer to the house and launch in the morning.

On the morning of September 15, 1993, I eased the trailer into "Lenoir City, City Park" at Fort Loudon Dam. The launching of the "Bullywooger" was almost anticlimactic. I backed the trailer down to the water and when the stern began to float I climbed out on the trailer tongue and pushed the boat free. The "Bullywooger" sat on the water with a quiet grace trimmed exactly where Phil Bolger had predicted. Honey and I walked the boat to the end of the dock and made it fast. I parked the car.

Honey, Anna, and I said a brief prayer for the well-being of the boat and blessings for all who would travel in it. Anna

poured a bottle of ale over the bow, and we were officially christened.

The ancient Johnson outboard had not been cranked in six months so a little fiddling and tuning were required before I had it idling and ready for a first run. "OK Honey. Put Anna's life jacket on her and lets see just what we've got here."

"I don't think so," Honey replied nervously, "it's awfully narrow, are you sure that it won't turn over?"

To ease Honey's fears I stepped off of the dock and balanced on the cockpit rail. The boat didn't move more than half an inch down on its waterline. "It won't roll over unless we do something really stupid at high speed," I assured her.

"Why don't you just go out alone for a few minutes and check everything?"

We unhitched the lines and I backed slowly away from the dock. I swung the bow around and pointed the boat out into the main body of the lake. Dreams, visions, and joy flooded over me as I eased the engine into gear and moved the throttle ahead. We quickly gathered headway and before I knew it we were up on a plane with the water chugging and slapping under the bow. I eased back on the gas to see if I could feel where it would settle back down off plane. For the life of me I could not find any point in particular where the boat was in transition. I tried a few low speed turns and assured myself that the boat would go in the direction that it was guided and circled the cove drifting to a stop at the end of the dock. "Where's Anna's life jacket? Come on let's go!" I called beckoning them aboard.

"I thought it was in the trunk of the car. You'll have to go on without us." I was so disappointed that I vowed to buy Anna a second life jacket and keep it in the boat.

Anna was jumping and cheering, "Daddy's boat! Daddy's boat!" as I gave Honey and Anna a wave and "gunned it". Phil Bolger was right! There was absolutely no change in the trim as we accelerated to full speed. No hole to climb out of, just nearly instant speed.

I eased the wheel to port and we cut a broad curve. I tightened the circle and looking back I saw that there was absolutely no wake, only a flat "carpet of foam" just as Phil had predicted. I swung the wheel from hard port to hard starboard as quickly as I could. The bow came around with responsive authority. I must note, that with the current angle of engine thrust (parallel with the bottom) the boat does not "bank" into a turn. I would say that there could not have been more than three to five degrees change in roll attitude. I will report on the results of different angle settings as they are made.

As to speed with the 1957 Johnson 18 horse, I cannot comment as I have only just purchased and have yet to install the speedometer, or to clock a measured mile. Better to say that, "she felt quite fast..." to a fellow who has never owned a motorboat before.

Since this is the first real motorboat that I have ever owned (the 10 foot aluminum Jon boat using the sailboat's two horse kicker doesn't count), I was in for quite a surprise when I went to load the boat on the trailer for the first time. My sailboat has a nice big responsive rudder and will go wherever the tiller directs as

long as she has some headway. The outboard steers only by thrust. Boy what a difference! I have a whole new set of skills to practice.

Weeks before when I was installing everything it dawned on me why Phil had not shown a rear seat. With the rear seat in place I wasn't able to reach the engine to give the rope a hearty yank. Without the seat, the starter is quite a stretch across the slop well but it is still accessible. I hung the back seat on the wall of the corn crib planning to save it for special occasions or when and if I could ever find that "nonexistent" short shaft 25 horse Johnson with remote controls and electric start.

But after having launched the boat and having cranked the old engine I went ahead and installed the back seat. It seems that the amount of stretch required to start the engine requires that the "Engineer" step back into the slop well with the engine. Before launching I had feared this but the boat is so stable that footing is no problem. I'll just have to be sure that the slop well doesn't get cluttered with a lot of stuff to get under foot.

Before I could get the "Bullywooger" out for a second run, the flu season caught up with my employees. I found myself doing double shifts and not boating while the colors of fall came and left.

With the start of November the T.V.A. began to lower the water in the lakes to "Winter Pool" level, and I had to slip "Bullywooger" off the trailer and back onto his milk crates to fetch the sailboat before it was stranded in the mud for the winter.

While lowering the lake level means the end of the boating season for most folks, it never has for me. To me "Winter Pool" only means that the launching ramps are longer. But until I get the trailer with the B-17 wheels roadworthy I will be limited to my sailboat. I think that I shall much prefer the sailboat for my winter escapes on the water anyway, as it does have a modest cabin, and a wonderful stove on which to keep the coffee hot.

While two year old Anna studies "Daddy's boat", all Daddy can do is smile. "T.G.I.F. Thank God It Floats!"





The day before the launching the "Bullywooger" arrived home for the first time on the sailboat trailer. My new neighbor three doors up dropped the box he was unloading from the moving van and ran to my house. "That, that's Phil Bolger's "Sneakeeasy"! I just bought plans for one of these!" "Yes," I replied, "and it's an instant boat too!"



Ready to launch on the Tennessee River. Perhaps the keen eyed reader will notice that the inspection plate on the port sponson is a coffee pot lid. I don't think I will ever forget to secure one again.



Anna and Honey (a.k.a Marsha) christen the "Bullywooger" with a bottle of ale.



The ancient Johnson had not been cranked in six months so a little fiddling and tuning were required before I had it idling and ready for a first run.

Dreams, visions, and joy flooded over me as I eased the engine into gear and moved the throttle ahead.



# Building a 13' Peapod

## Part 2

By Richard Honan

While visiting Boston's Museum of Art with my wife, we walked into the American Masters Gallery. There, on the wall, we came across a 19th century painting by Thomas Eakins of two young boys sailing a "peapod." This design has a long history both as a pleasure boat and as a work boat.

Before I actually start building the hull of my "peapod," I am building the various components of the boat. Last week we fabricated the laminated stems that make up part of the integral framing of the boat. This week Christian Buonopane and I concentrated on constructing the centerboard box, always remembering what my Italian grandfather, Anthony Bonzagni said, "measure ten times, cut once."



**Thomas Eakins**

American, 1844–1916

*Starting Out After Rail*, 1874

Oil on canvas mounted on Masonite

Rail—small wading birds with a shrill cry—were a popular target for hunters along the Delaware River near Philadelphia. The precision with which Eakins captured the play of light across the water, the tilt of the boat in the breeze, even the texture of the men's clothes all demonstrate his extraordinary technical skill.

The Hayden Collection—Charles Henry Hayden Fund, 1935 35.1953



It's been a madhouse around here lately, the weather cools off a little and boat builders come out of the woodwork making noise and dust and the occasional bad word, usually associated with the measure twice, cut once, throw it out and do it again rule. What has come over these guys?

I'll show Howard first. This is a cool ass ski boat he's making, it looks way bigger and wider after we rolled it over. He's going to have a planked mahogany deck but needs some  $\frac{1}{4}$ " mahogany plywood for trim and the transom and kept asking where he could get some. I kept saying "right there" but he somehow didn't grasp that I had bought it for him some months ago. I had to take a sheet of it out and lay it on the boat for him to realize that it really was  $\frac{1}{4}$ " mahogany ply. I wish I could say that he was the only one who did this but we know who else, don't we?



Simon has been here for a week putting a new bottom on his little tugboat and hasn't seen how I roll boats. I just threw some straps over the rafters, lifted the hull up and called him to help push it over. He looked at the boat and the rafters and asked what any of you would have asked, "are these rafters going to hold the weight?" Yep, they did. I have to admit Simon can really put in a day's work. I try to think back when I was 50 if I ever worked this hard but can't remember.



## From the Tiki Hut

*By Dave Lucas*

These two are my favorites. Don't ever stand on top of a ladder and "look mom, I'm getting covered with fiberglass dust." Simon is a mild mannered guy but he was raving nut-case when he was finished with this. I don't know if he jumped in the shower or the river, I probably would have done both. I wonder what Cristy will say when she sees these.



John's houseboat is coming right along, he's prewiring as much as he can where he thinks (hopes) things will go. And since you can't really tell how big things are, you have to order them ahead of time to make sure they'll fit where you think they will. I love the giant tri hull this thing has, it should be a good, stable platform. We were looking at it this afternoon when he said, "son of a bitch, I forgot to put a window in the bathroom." No big deal, all it means is getting a window, cutting a hole in the wall, framing it in where he didn't want framing to be. He's running out of room to put in all of the things he wants, I have no sympathy for him at all. Notice that the cabin is a full 8' wide, unlike the next one.



That would be the *Queen Anne*. I can reach out and touch both walls, inside cabin is 6' wide. She's long (36') and narrow and will cut through the water like a hot knife but it's a challenge making stuff fit. This space you're looking at is a shot with me standing in the engine room, which will house two outboard motors, two 28gal fuel tanks, a 4kw and a 2kw Honda generator. John will have all kinds of solar stuff on his houseboat so I'm watching it as it comes in. The area behind the step where the brown square is will be the bathroom with shower, sink, toilet and cabinets. Under that brown thing is a sump (which is already wired and plumbed) to catch the shower water and any water on the floor of this wet area.



There's no telling what I've forgotten to do but I really don't want to be cutting holes in the watertight ballast tank roof to get to anything. Two 50gal water tanks are already installed under the floor up where the kitchen is. The area forward of the step is the cabin. The area where the green mat is will be the refrigerator with cabinets above. Across from that is where the air conditioner sits with a counter and drawers above. The microwave will probably be over there, also. The dinette will seat four and sleep one. With the cushions laid down our feet will stick through the back making a 6' 6" bed. The counter on the left is 6' long but only 18" wide, it's going to be a challenge getting a sink and stove in that small space and still be useful but I'm getting close.



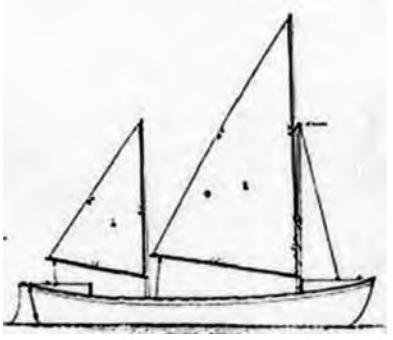
All of these little things are what wakes me up at 3am. Helen is a good resource to help me see things that I've missed. John also. None of us likes help but some things are obvious to others where I can't see because I've been looking at it for months.

Tom and Kathy have taken the Carpenter hull that Jim made years ago and are turning it into a motorboat with a top with a fringe. It is sort of stable with 300lbs of ballast inside but without that this hull will roll you like 20' stovepipe. I guess the reason you never see any of these "famous" boats at any of our boat meets is because they are horrible sailboats. For any of you who've thought of building one my advice is Don't Do It.



**Carpenter**  
LOA 18, LOP 16'3",  
Beam 4'6" Draft 5"

The double ended Carpenter was designed by L. Francis Herreshoff for traditional construction in wood (his design #41) as a tender to a previously built boat named Walrus. The original plans are a part of the collection at Mystic Seaport, details in *Sensible Cruising Designs*, page 351.



Not finished yet. Wally found a leak in the glass in the hardest to reach area in his boat. That always the case, isn't it? He's been out there grinding and cutting and drilling and sanding. The rest of us just stay away so we don't get sucked into "helping."



At the end of the day, or whenever we can't take anymore, the dock is the place to go. We have some comfortable chairs out there and this time of the year this is the best place to enjoy the golden hour.



Helen and I were headed out for Cedar Key with little *Laylah* boat pulling along behind us when all of a sudden all hell broke loose behind us and the trailer tried to turn on its own and a wheel came rolling past me. We weren't far from home and I wasn't going fast so I got it off the road in a safe place and got out to check what the hell had happened.

I am very particular about my trailers, this one had new tires, bearings, springs and bunks. Both of the springs were broken off where the bolt goes through and the end of the axle was broken off. We dropped the boat and went home for another trailer. We pushed Wally's melon off on the ground for his trailer, took it to the spot and pulled *Laylah* off the broken trailer and winched her up onto Wally's trailer. We took it home and got another big trailer and put the remains of my trailer on Richard's stripped down trailer. After a careful examination it appears that the axle on the left side broke off which caused massive stress to break both of the springs. I guess this is another thing I'll have to keep an eye on in the future.



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## A Pause for Inspection

Jamie the Seadog came out to see how things are going and I'd say that his timing was pretty good. The boat came to us with V-berth cushions. Other than being vinyl covered and blue, they still fit up for'd.



The piece that used to sit on the filler piece to make a pretty wide berth sorta fit the new couch/berth that we built. So far it looks like it's all gonna work out.



That residual rug glued to the hull is still resisting our best efforts to pull it off. I'm thinking that we just might have to spread a little of that "Lucas Varnish" around, latex house paint just as long as it ain't blue. Most of the vertical and overhead surfaces will get some sort of brightwork overlay.

Looks pretty big for an 18' hull, especially since two of those feet are soaked up in a full width motor well. Things are looking downright encouraging.

## That's What all the Hubbub is About

We're trying to get things ready for a new boat to enter a new Voyaging Season in some semblance of readiness. It's a problem, especially when not much gets accomplished when I'm not out there.

After I finally got to work and got things moving I did get some stuff done. Here we're looking forward from a ladder, just aft of the rather massive motor well.



The basic layout is pretty much set. We have a combo desk and wardroom table immediately to port. The original galley

# The View from AlmostCanada by Dan Rogers

flat with sink and water tank comes next. Because of a bunch of messing with the V-berth, the original vinyl cushions still fit. There's a pretty much figured out couch and berth immediately to starboard. Not a lot of space in what is basically a 16' boat with a 2' motor well tacked on behind.



There's a probably gonna work helm station shaping up to starboard. I don't have the steering stuff yet and I didn't bring in the swivel chair yet for exact placement. The big deal is that the faux ribs have been set to hang the ceiling strips on. The 1" styro sheets are in place between those rib thingies. There's even a sort of cap piece over those ribs to both hold the styro in place and to give me a bigger target to glue and tack those ceiling strips.

I quickie milled up a couple cedar staves and looked for an appropriate set of curves and stuff. The notion is to parallel that line both up to the deck and down to the berth flat.

## Short Cuts

It took the better part of two days to get the forward berth done up in ceiling strips. Until then I was gonna use a couple of sheets of mahogany plywood fitted to the hull sides. Then I got to thinking about how hard it is to get things to fit in that itty bitty space. *Walk-about* has a very generous bow flair. The geniuses at ChrisCraft might have managed to torture wood into a complex shape like this one, but not this kid. That's where a simple notion like hanging some sort of insulation and covering got completely out of hand.



This hull came upholstered in some sort of gawdawful fuzzy rug. Functional maybe, attractive not. Full hull liners came to fiberglass boats sometime after this one was born. Truth be told, I'm forever trying to cover

over hull liners with pieces of a tree, so what transpired was time consumingly traditional.

There's a pretty fine line between OK and not OK on a job like this. Since there was no way I was going to get even the cedar strakes I used this time to bend to the full extent of the curves presented, it was necessary to estimate the final three dimensional curves using a heavy dose of intuition. That's why those faux ribs got glued to the hull in varying angles to the horizontal. There were four or five to a side and the biggest problem came when I remembered that I couldn't snap a spline along the ribs to determine if there was gonna be any flat spots or unfair curves until they are all glued into place. Once I get to the testing part, it's too late.



The "best" orientation was at a 15° up angle to the berth flat. Kinda rakish. That made for a bunch of partial runs in the top/aft and bottom/forward corners. That also required some spontaneity in getting additional anchor points inserted, essentially after everything was in place. With those two additional problems it brought the number of strata on each side up to 20. Each strip took at least two, and often as many as four or five, trips up and down the ladder and an equal number of dives into the catacombs.



We finally had both sides glued and tacked into place. It took three 8' cedar 2"x6"s to make this pile of sticks. Not likely easier than cutting up a sheet of 1/4" plywood but certainly more "authentic." There's even



a filler piece to set in the forepeak. It's just rough cut and waiting for somebody to sand and glue the thing together.



### It All Boils Down to a Guessing Match

Our current fixation, *Walkabout*, is supposed to be lighter and smaller and easier to manage than her big sister, *Miss Kathleen*. It would really be nice to have most of the innovations and brilliant schemes worked into *MK* over the past three years. How do we do it better than last time? How do we skip some of the past mistakes?

Sooooo, there we were already working on interior gingerbread. Trim stuff is already getting fashioned and some of the glue that doesn't actually get all over my hands and in my hair is glumpled onto sticks and shards of once proud cedar trees and stuck onto curved and recalcitrant substrates. Each of these sticks takes several trips in and out and back and forth to the table saw and the router table and the miter saw and band saw and disc and belt sanders. All with an eye toward getting this opus out of the shop and into the water on-time, on sked.



And then, there it was, another shiny object, actually several of 'em all really heavy and awkward and left over from about four boats ago. Not that birch flitch, that's

just standing around until inspiration strikes. Those tigerwood hatches came from the hull that got taken to the dump to make room on a trailer that *Walkabout* was supposed to ride on from Whidbey but didn't get used.



Wouldn't it just be really cool to find a place for them other than the firewood bin? Maybe out here? No, not those heavy as a Volkswagen slabs but maybe something else, something the same but really different. Hmnnn...



### Time for a Victory Lap

0914, 17 September: Leaving Whidbey Island, bound for AlmostCanada.



1403, 17 September: At a rest stop above Leavenworth, Washington. Getting back on the trailer after coming closer than I ever care to come to complete disaster. We met a lot of really wonderful people in the rest stop and I reevaluated how I do things and how I check what I do that day.



1523, 1 October: Little Whutz'ername wins the toss. Time to get serious.



1613, 6 October: There's no turning back and that was about four weeks ago. In fact, we were still taking boat trips and going sailing locally. Lots of early on head scratching and a heavy dose of wunderwhuts. Not lots of progress. So what do we have after a month in the operating room?



The layout is pretty well settled and in honor of that I found an old can of oil paint in what we call "Fiddler's Green Crème." It's basically antique white. I didn't have a cut in brush and didn't figure it would cover all that well with just a dribble of paint left in the can with three or four skins formed over the past year. So this is a "mock up" paint test.



This, the view from out on the back porch, is about what I've been angling for. Maybe more wood, maybe just canvas coverings and paint with carpet and cushions and some sort of wood panels in the overhead. Who knows? I'll have to go back out and see what *Walkabout* thinks later. One way or t'other, these boats pretty much build themselves.



The forward berth and helm station are shaping up pretty well. Still gotta fill all those nail holes and sand and varnish.



Our "mulch toilet" box and the new couch/berth/stowage is about what it'll look like, cushions and paint yet to go, of course. There's a helm chair pedestal that needs to find a home in that foot well.



Those two port lights and the exterior facia have yet to be figured out. Probably some horizontal tiger wood staves to parallel the interior cedar ones. Some sort of circle trim, already been practicing with my circle cutter jig. And that itty bitty galley is in for a bit of a face lift. In fact, I think the whole top is going to "come up in the world." Now there's standing headroom, I can't think of a good reason to have a kneeling height galley counter.



We're a month in, much to do, quite a bit's gotten done.

## A Little Rain Gotta' Fall on Every Parade

Fifty-eight years ago them boys at the Bell Boy Co did an awesome job of keeping wood in its place and fiberglass in its. That was one of the most telling arguments for bringing this Really Cool Hull home for Frankenmods. The stringers are glass, not namby pamby one by softwood turned to crepe. Not even plywood cores to the deck. Well, maybe a few stiffeners. This little girl is still hell for stout still, got it.

I finally got around to lying on my back and sliding up under the massive motor

well and peeking into places that I've never peeked into yet. Other than a few soft spots in the berth flats and cabin sole, there hadn't been anything much to worry about in the traditional sense of Frankenbuilding. Except inside that quite massive transom are the remnants of most of a sheet of  $\frac{3}{4}$ " ply, probably all gone to punk and paper.



Nuthin' new or particularly scary. Just kinda surprising. On some of these I've been down to as little as the final layer of gelcoat and had to bring the whole caboodle back from the dead. This little girl has what you might think of as a really thick skin. The glass layers over much of this appear to be thick enough to carry Miss Suzi's weight and thrust. We'll get'erdone, just not today.

Kate came out to provide Inspection Services when I was fixin' to put canvas and paint on a bunch of the interior surfaces. She thought I should stick with the cedar trees that were "falling into place" in some of those other spots. She's likely right, about showing a passle more woodgrain inside anyhow.



We don't even try anymore to get real boat lumber. This stuff is all sold as construction grade cedar, expensive and full of knots and such. So we're back to the cabin in the woods look but we have to take what we can get and I think it'll be just about OK. I'm kinda getting a hunch that the overhead panels just might have a bit of the grain to 'em, too.



## Ain't Likely to Get Anything Done

Somewhere along the line I decided that holding and fitting and cutting and refitting a full sized panel overhead was just not gonna work, so I decided to simply cut the

big one into two pieces and use a few covering boards. That was hours and hours ago. Also, with a memory for what's already gotten done like mine, it's a real liability without some sort of a record of how things are framed and assembled behind such a panel. We're not even getting to the point of dealing with squirting PL Premium against gravity so I decided a short break might be in order.

That little dab of sticks just don't look like it could occupy even me for hours and hours. Well, it did and now there's another side just like this one that needs to get dolled up. And those covering boards, too. And this is only half the overhead stuff that hasta get insulated and framed and sawn and resawn and routed and sanded and cut to fit and chamfered and glued. And DROPPED now and then.



Oops, I'm wrong on that, this overhead section is only one-third of the overhead sections. I'd better get back to work.



## One 'a Them Lottaguzzintas

I'm afraid it took all damn day to frame and insulate and cover about 16sf of the underside of that boat roof but we did have a bit of an epiphany. That 4" piece of thin birch plywood just over the port light hole sticks out from the cabin side a couple of inches. That's where the lighting is gonna live, maybe even antediluvian fluorescent tubes. We put some pretty bright LED fixtures in *Miss Kathleen*'s overhead after the most recent complete cabin replacement. They don't draw a lot of juice. But in a small, low slung space such as one of these boats, that mega lumen fixture can hit you right in the ol' retina.



So today's epiph was to allow for a bit of a valance. Nothing new to the RV crowd and, like those land yachties, I'm thinking that these could be covered in the same fabric that ends up on the berth cushions.

It don't take so very much imagination to figure out where our next big push will come. I guess you could say that this job is constantly looking up.



### First Law of Frankenbuilding

"When installing the most complex, hardest to reach panel, no matter how many dry fit attempts have been made, no matter how much planning or thought is involved, the glue will drip on my forehead and the nailer will be out of reach."



First Corollary: When reaching for the nailer, only the stapler will be in reach and the stapler will not contain nails, and only my clean shirt will be available to clean the glue from my forehead."

So, somehow, despite our very best efforts, this second piece of the puzzle has more pieces glumpled up and awaiting the cure all trim strips. Progress somehow! A few more squirts of PL, a few more trips to the saw 'n grinder 'n utility knife, a few more... and we'll have all but forgotten all about it.



What comes next? Yup, lookin' up and dripping down of course.

### First, the Good News (Part 1)

There is only one structurally significant piece of wood in this boat. Now the rest of the news. That particular piece of wood is the entire core of the transom. Much of it is the consistency of wet coffee grounds, some more like damp garden bark. Not a huge surprise. Not a complete delight either. I'm hiding out here at the keyboard, screwing up a bit more enthusiasm for continuing with the inevitable excavation. That, and deciding which is, among all the undesirable alternative courses of action, the least undesirable.



I already tried some "minimally invasive" approaches like maybe attempting to just scale off the top of the rotten part and soak the remainder with 'pox and put in a new core from the top. That was the idea for an hour or two until it became patently obvious that "top rot" extended for almost 2' down and around 6' across. I got to using an 18" long  $\frac{5}{8}$ " drill bit like a huge burr ball and Archimedes screw to dig out and bring the mulch up high enough to get the shop vac to bear.



This view from under the quite massive motor well shows a trio of non wood knees that attach to the inner skin. It would be a really good idea to save them. For some reason, that inner skin doesn't run full width so there will be some more head scratching before this all gets settled.



What started out to be sort of a simple doctor's visit to get an ingrown toenail dealt with has turned into full on open heart surgery. The moaning chair won't be too crowded anyway.

### First, the Good News (Part 2)

The patient's gonna live. There was still an island of sorta hard fir tree in there, here and there. I whittled the diseased part down with several oscillating and reciprocating machines and found about the bottom of the worst of it. Should be able to insert a 2"x6" back in the hole and glass it over.



I asked Kate to come out and give me some color and design inputs. Even I know that blue paint under the motor well has to go. I was pretty much stalled on whether to use green accents here and there like on these sliding doors and the valance over the port light and whether to make the port trim ring bright or painted.



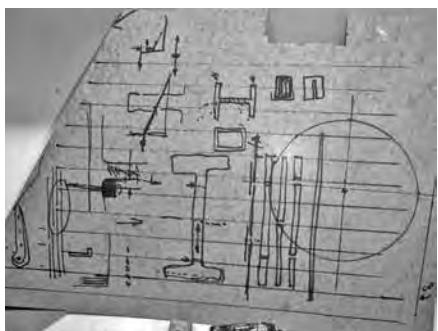
The helm seat has gotten affixed, pretty solidly, too. Even the forward catacombs were looking pretty good with about one more coat of finish to slather around yet.



Right after our décor consultation I was thinking it would be about time to pop that trim strip off that transom and take a look see. Well, that was one way to blow a whole day. Tomorrow we'll make a prosthesis and do some suturing. Then maybe we can get back to some of that foo foo stuff. Hanging gingerbread is a lot less traumatic.

### First, the Good News (Part 3)

This dang thing woke me up at zero three, the wunderwhuts were getting intense so I called in an expert, Sam. He doesn't charge a lot for his services but I figure his advice is worth everything I pay for it. I had some primo drafting stock,  $\frac{1}{4}$ " Masonite with some prior wunderwhuts on it to give some cache.



We talked about deflections and oil canning and other engineering ephemera, about moduli of just about everything like "heedrals" and "vectors." We figured that maybe I had the right idea after all. As long as I remembered the particularly significant angles, things were likely to work out.

There's the uppedee stress members and lefteeeightee ones, too. Gotta mix some pox and glumph it all together under some of that Duckworks biax tape

### First, the Good News (Part 4)

As Sam pointed out, this ain't exactly rocket science so, after getting the component parts cut and glued and screwed and

shaped and put in their respective places, a couple batches of Silvertip (fast) 'pox and several layers of bi axial tape over all the exposed wood edges and previously cut hull parts and it's a bit of a "Tah Dah!" moment.



Time to get back to work on something more fun at least. There's only three and a half months left until March!

### The View From the Top (Part 1)

I've been putting this little task off hoping it would sort of go away. I've got to drag my already scheduled for replacement knee up that scaffold ladder and do a bunch of black magic on a boat roof that is held together with some weird juju and legerdemain. The Real Boat Builder Guys wouldn't have this sort of trouble, they would have already done it while it was in the mold, down on the bench, at convenient working angles. Mold?



Nobody really knew what this thing was gonna actually look like before it got fabricated. Up there, about 18" from the shop ceiling, is a confabulation of MDO plywood and doorskins sprung over a stainless steel tube frame. It's goo'd together with PL3X and then glass taped to a fairtheewell. But it ain't remotely smooth, nor is it completely glassed over nor conveniently within reach.



### The View From the Top (Part 2)

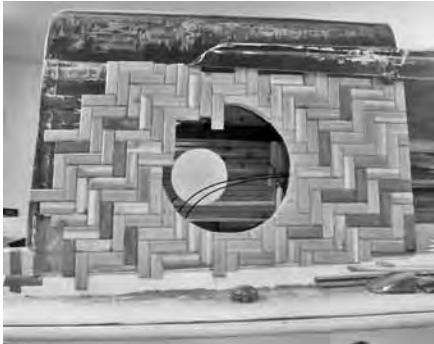
Trying to figure what might go on top of this cabin addition, I grabbed at the first item I saw in DW's "Pox 'n Friends" column. Not what I really needed, even if that's what I did, in fact, order. That stuff was just sooooo prone to snagging and staying wrinkled for the location, and especially the skill levels and general proclivities of this technician, I flung it up onto the top of our "Someday Maybe" shelf and grabbed another vagrant from another pox job. Fortunately it was still about 7' long and just made the spans.



It's either the basic plan, or what I have settled for, to just get a membrane over the top of the top to slather paint on. There's still some more of those cedar staves to glue on the sides. But I can actually reach them from the floor. If I lower my standards and get back far enough, it all looks like it'll work out. Maybe I should stand back even a bit farther.



## Like It or Not I'd Better Like This!



Just because I don't always know what I am going to do next doesn't exactly mean I don't know what I am doing. It took a whole damn day to get this far. Well, most of it. Today was Thanksgiving Day. While the rest of the country was obliged to either cook or watch football, I had a special blessing. Logan and Patrick showed up and, with Kate's help, they got started on putting a feast together. It was made plain that I should "just keep outta the way."



And nobody had to tell me twice as long as they didn't call me late for dinner, that is. Today was a day of turning an unruly pile of cedar one by's into a neat little stack of itty bitty sticks, 200 of those silly little cubes per side, twice. Every one of 'em had to be chamfered on four sides on the router table. I have a four wing bearing bit standing up through the hole in my veteran Rockler table with my veteran Bosch router doing the heavy lifting.



This process, the epitome of tedium, is kept as safe as possible with jointer push blocks enhanced with sandpaper glued over the rubber pads. Even working slow, methodical and focused, about one in ten of those little pieces get splintered or spun off as a projectile. I normally run these small, soft work pieces the "wrong way" or with the turn of the bit for the first pass, followed by a finishing stroke the conventional direction.



All so I can have an Only One Like it in the World chunk of seagoing gingerbread, stuck on, like Johnny Cash built his car. One. Piece. At. A. Time.



**Hey!  
This Just Might Get Scientific**

I still don't know how I'm gonna cover over those ersatz port holes in *Walkabout's*

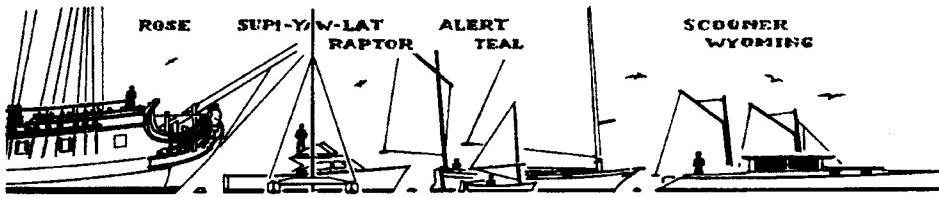
aft superstructure. The "plan" has been to make some sort of rings out of some sort of sheet stock. The Big Idea has been to use a hole cutting jig to make 'em out of MDO plywood, about four concentric rings per side. The ID of these rings hovers above and below 16". Cutting them out of the MDO will create a lot of round pieces of plywood and considerable sawdust, neither of which is a lot of use at the moment.



We visual learners normally do better when the actual thing is in front of us. I've been at a loss how to do this. Vaguely, I've had this idea that I could make up blanks to render into trim rings that would cover the outside and supply a land for the window pane and fill in the span from outside to inside and a few other hoped for outcomes. But how to do such a thing? I just hadn't a clue.

So I consulted the Craftsman Sliding Miter Oracle. It was the essence of simplicity. Through the wonders of Higher Math, even I know that if I want to make an octagon, all I gotta do is cut angles at 22.5°. This might even be fun.





**PHIL BOLGER & FRIENDS, INC  
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GLOUCESTER, MA 01930  
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Well, I almost forgot about that letter Editor Bob published in the July 2018 issue under "Information Wanted," but not quite. The reminder sticker referring to it was near my screens and so, to get it off my agenda at last, I delay the final 31' concept study for the second time. Some may forgive me.

Reader John Smith of Hamilton, New Jersey, asked:

"How Big? When my friend and I built our skiff way back in junior high the size was determined by our local lumberyard having 10' sheets of plywood. I've known several people who have built, or bought, boats the size of which was determined by the size of their garages. Obviously, if one is going to trailer a boat, size restrictions come into play. The SACPAS that has consumed many pages in this magazine was sized to fit into a shipping container. When such restrictions are not a factor, I often wonder how a boat ends up being 39', 42' etc. They certainly come in all lengths and sizes."

Does a client come in and say I want a specific length?

Does the client have specific needs and a boat is designed around them? Maybe those who do the designing may want to cover this as a subject.

John Smith, Hamilton, New Jersey"

As John knows from his own experience, bearing in mind the basic attributes of boat building materials, size matters in the design of boats, certainly in projects of the size *MAIB* readers may have in mind. Since earliest days of folks designing for plywood, and certainly through Phil's 57 years of design work, the commonly available size of plywood has, and should have, influenced certain elements of the work. Nowadays, in most places here in North America at least, we face an 8'x4' (122cm x 244cm) standard size of plywood, usually in thicknesses between  $\frac{1}{8}$ " and 1".

Here and there longer, if not wider, sheets may be available upon request and at additional charge. For example, nearby Boulter Plywood of Medford, Massachusetts, offers 10'x4' Douglas fir, but it seems only in  $\frac{3}{4}$ " thickness. Boulter also offers merranti in 4'x16' from  $\frac{5}{32}$ " through  $\frac{1}{2}$ ", and even wider sheets, such as okoume at 5'x10' between  $\frac{5}{32}$ " and 34". It matters to scout the availability of these as you are preparing for a given project, particularly if the extra cost will save much more in labor, time, energy.

However, the designing of boats should reflect a mid to long term perspective, meaning typically using the standard 4'x8' ply sheet as a reasonably hard reference mark to assure the usefulness of these plans across years, decades, generations, therefore preferably without de facto dependence on some non-standard sizes that may seem convenient for now but may not be at hand down the line, at least not without a painful premium in cost, if they'd be available at all.

A lot of the smaller designs out of this office across its now 66 years of operations have indeed been developed around

## Phil Bolger & Friends on Design

### Design Column #531 in *MAIB* Response to July 2018 Letter to The Editor

that given basic set of dimensions, basically with an eye towards maximizing the use of the given length and width. If a boat comes out at, say 15'6" length, this will usually be a result of keeping the need to join two sheets to just one such size, often via butt blocks or either of the two types of Payson joints, such as discussed in *MAIB* of July 2011 Vol 29, No 3. Ply sheets joined this way end to end also does not waste any of the plywood's length, with two sheets indeed measuring 16' in length or 8'x8' if you join them along the long side. I just offer up this two ply sheets Design #363, Tortoise, for minimal waste of even just those two sheets.

That is why you'd find few (if any) designs in the Bolger Archive referring to scarfing. Despite various gadgets and opinions, that process can be quite tricky as, for instance, thinner sheets of Douglas fir can be quite temperamental in both grain density and overall relative flatness fresh out of the mill so as to often thoroughly frustrate the best planned scarfing routine even after practicing with the gadget to really get good at producing a perfectly matching set of mirror identical edges to then be glued together. If you follow the scarfing method you may be forced into the universe of tight grained harder imported species, often out of unhappy ecological if not political circumstances, certified or not, most certainly loaded up with many more transportation miles than the typical domestic species would have on their backs.

The most dubious aspect may well be that scarfing always makes the joined pieces shorter (!) as that (better be) perfectly tapered 12:1 angle joint will cost you 12x the thickness of the sheet per pair, or 6" in the case of  $\frac{1}{2}$ " ply, for a maximum length of the double length of now only 15'6", or 23' with three sheets. And since you are building a boat and not a flat profile of one for that wall decoration, wrapping that length around a mid station will quickly shrink the boat towards just 15' hull length even though you started with nominally 16' of ply. In Phil's, and later our, archives we'd typically end up with boats of around 15'6" net hull length on say a 4' mid width, plus rudders, a clipper bow addition perhaps, or another stout stem piece addition forward, if not also on her stern, should she be a double ender.

You see where preferences in this office lie, between the perfectly low tech, well controllable Payson joint Mk.2, and then not losing hull length per ply length, with the added benefit, that all this is scalable upwards as that 39'1" SACPAS-3 project demonstrated, also made narrow enough to fit the 7'8" door opening width of the standard ISO-40 con-

tainer in millions of copies out there, as John Smith mentioned. Phil's Design #576 Loose Moose II at near 38' for instance showed a five ply approach some 30 years ago, however, on full 8' plywood correct beam.

And that includes the easy option of multiplying panel thickness to double, triple etc thickness once the first full length Payson jointed master panel has been built flat on the floor, ready to be carefully lifted and draped over horses that will give that lamination sequence the correct curve, and even twist if need be. With that master panel perfectly cut, aligned and then joined, adding to its thickness is just a matter of applying epoxy and temporarily screwing the new ply piece one at a time right over the first piece, however, 50% staggered, to have each new individual 8' long ply piece cover the Payson joint with 4' left and right of that joint.

Good thing then, that with that first set of Payson joints making up that masterpanel, and the support horse below defining the final full length panel curve and possibly twist, no further Payson joint efforts are necessary, just the patience to do a good job not over applying epoxy for the lamination and to not throw on another layer immediately, since you need to wait to pull those nasty perfectly ferrous but exquisitely self cutting drywall screws in around six to eight hours before the epoxy assumes its death grip and will requiring soldering iron heating each screw head to release the whole screw.

Yes, some will right now point to the elegance and fine art of vacuum bagging, which usually requires a certain amount of hardware, prep, additional waste, but can be indeed perfect for certain applications. I, however, never minded poking lots of screw holes through the fresh layer in order to perfectly control relative pressure during the lamination, never mind the challenge of somehow setting up a perimeter for the gasket so vital to allow the initial formation of a vacuum on this one off hull, more doable if built in production modus and can rationalize the extra support structures, machinery, and consumables.

Instead, starting at the end of the master panel or the edge of the previously applied layer, you locate the sheet with a few first screw shots, and then proceed moving from its centerline away from the first edge and outwards to the long panel edges, all to get the best alignment and prevent the ply from de facto bubbling here and there because you created that problem by pinning down all four corners first rather than proceeding in a linear fashion and from centerline outwards.

Beyond plywood, there are no doubt welders amongst *MAIB* readers, what is the longest piece of steel or aluminum that you can buy and then safely control on the shop floor? Phil did a 16' steel tug with the largest steel structure built to his design featured in *MAIB* of March 2013 (Vol 30 No 11) with Design #410 Phouma measuring 96.5'x16'.

Of course, all this focus on plywood economics or standard metal lengths and

widths with the interest in rapid assembly of as stout a ply based panel you'd like, scalable to well beyond the 40' projects touched upon above, all this goes out the window if you have your heart set on, say Design #372 Romp, a cat yawl on a plumb ended and yet still voluptuous free flowing 30'x8'4"x1'6" barge yacht hull model. Here, at best the centerboard, the rudder and the deck, bulkheads and bunks would be out of plywood with the ever so shapely hull itself either strip-planked or double diagonally cold molded in veneers, materials you may better measure in bundles, altogether a very different mindset required from design to construction. Once invested in either of these construction methods, plywood length pedantics become at best secondary, only of some relevance if you'd rather not need 8'2" for that deck's width.

Folks having built a few of Phil's ply and free form designs in one off fiberglass methods, they may well have faced their own material length constraints, not to mention the skills required to control fiberglass assembly of a free flow hull without any mold. But those ambitions are better left to the motivated.

Since we are not influenced by market research, once you are out of the voluntary constraints of material lengths, very personal reasons may have some go for some inexplicable length, based perhaps on an emotionally relevant memory, a reference design, some deep seated experience guiding parameters or just an arbitrary unrestrained why not reflex.

In some places legal barriers will have you prefer to stay under, say, nine meter or 29.5' which may or may not explain AS-29 at exactly that length, vs the ply based possible 31' or so. No immediate reason in my mind, without going back for study, why Design #520 Wyoming is 51'6", perhaps a 6.5 ply length exercise.

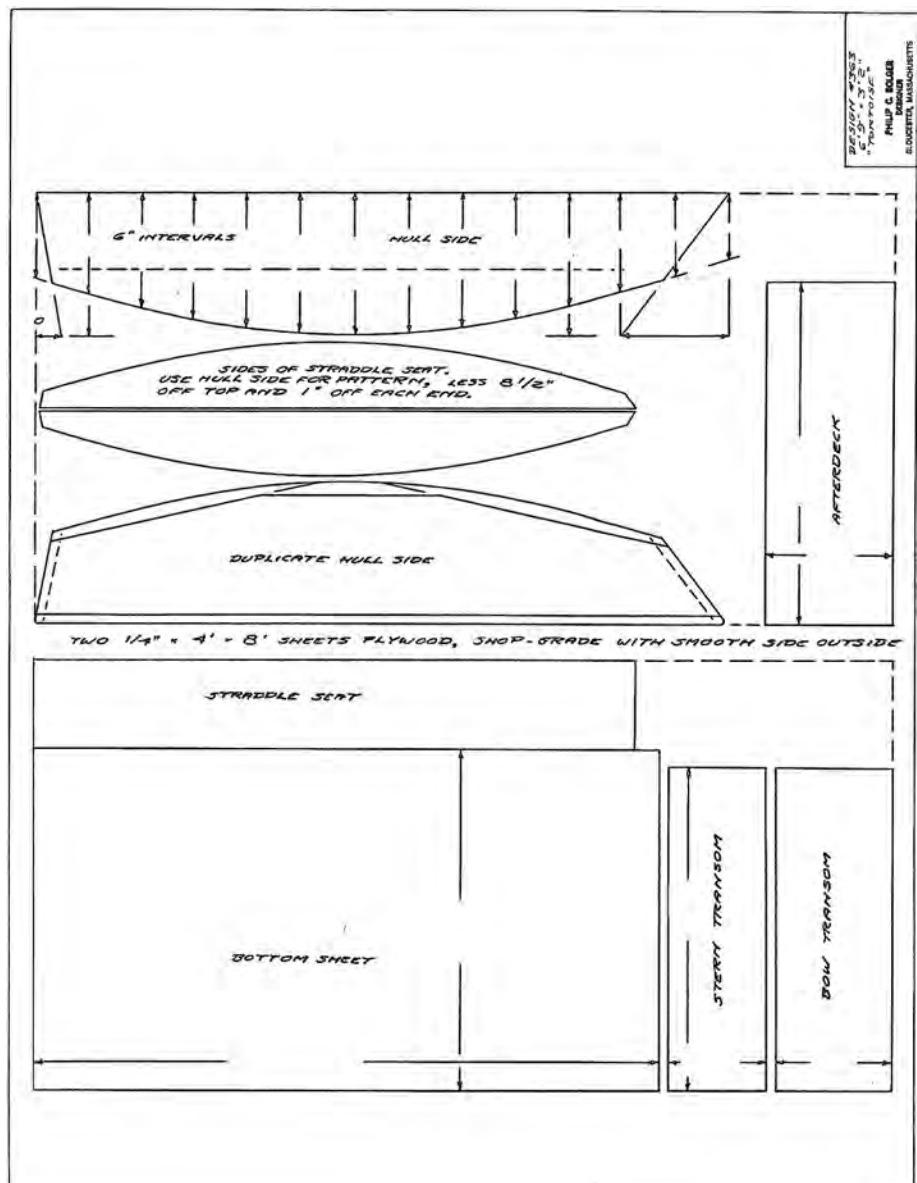
In these parts, marinas will charge by the length, a seemingly normal idea for those not preferring long and lean hulls. Lots of work to be done to remotivate marina operators to invite the latter hulls as well via dedicated long and narrow boats slips, or variable finger pier mounts to allow their on demand movement to bring in three lean hulls in the space of two wider ones. And then you'd charge like folks in Paraguay seem to by the square foot/meter, as in length times beam, independent of your preferences for short and wide or long and narrow hulls.

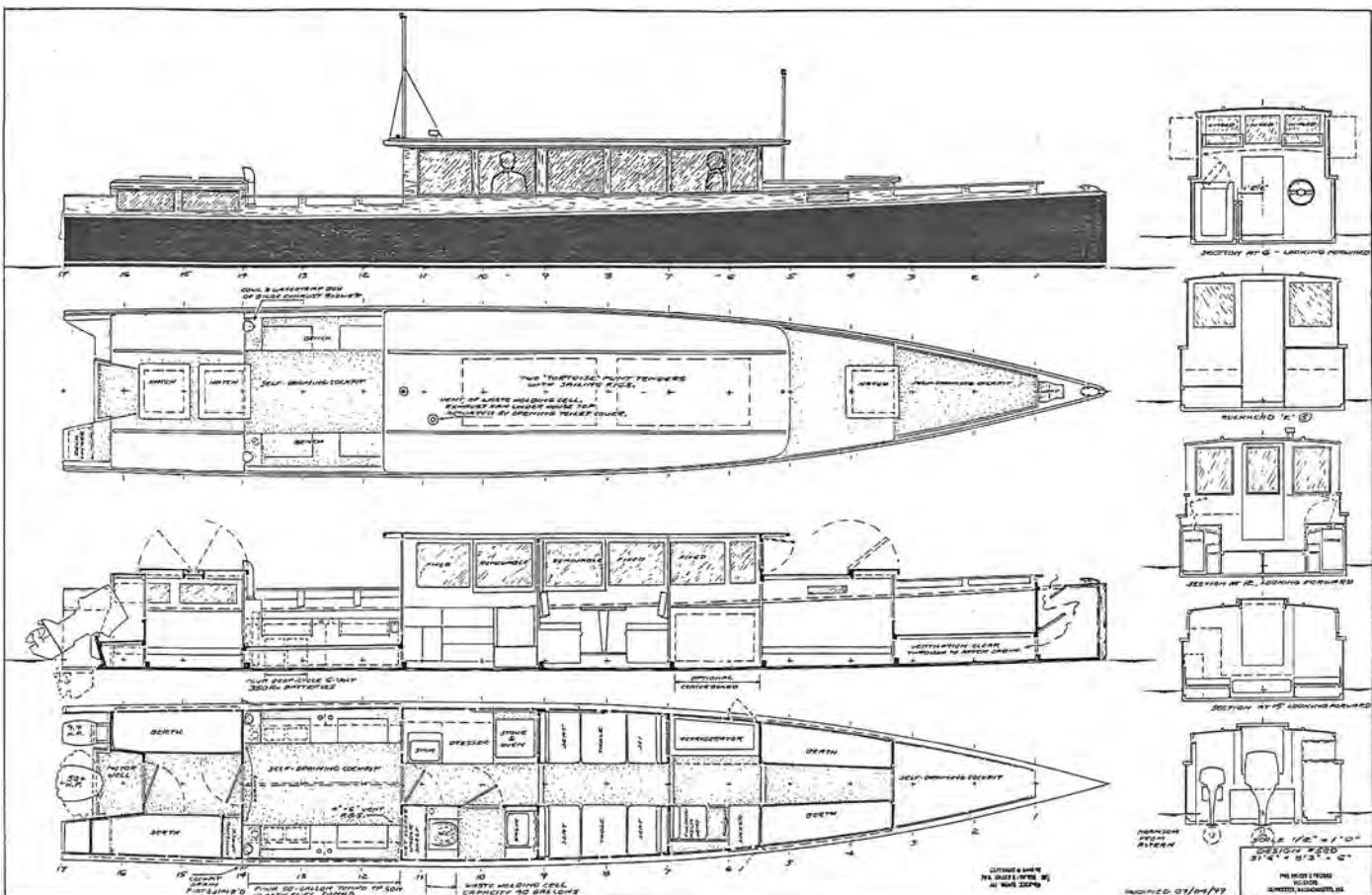
To summarize, on the one hand, designing and indeed building boats, you get to think reflexively along standard material length, best use of materials bought, maximizing progress per time, hopefully minimizing waste. On the other hand, to not turn into a narrow metrics driven maniac, the counter cure is the periodic unrestrained pursuit of irrationally elaborate hull shapes, a rich diversity of projected uses and a de facto cranky refusal to submit to whatever restraints for too long. Likely a healthy approach as Phil's unpredictably diverse archive documents, borne of opportunities offered by mail or in person, driven by the juices a lifelong study of manmade things that float will produce, a means to challenge conventions with contrarian proposals, to then reconcile with exercises in all out beauty for the really rich and we average folks alike. But, of course, John Smith pretty much knew much of this already. Good question anyway.

We will get to that final 31' power boat study next issue, meaning that four lengths of 8' ply sheets Payson-jointed geometry.

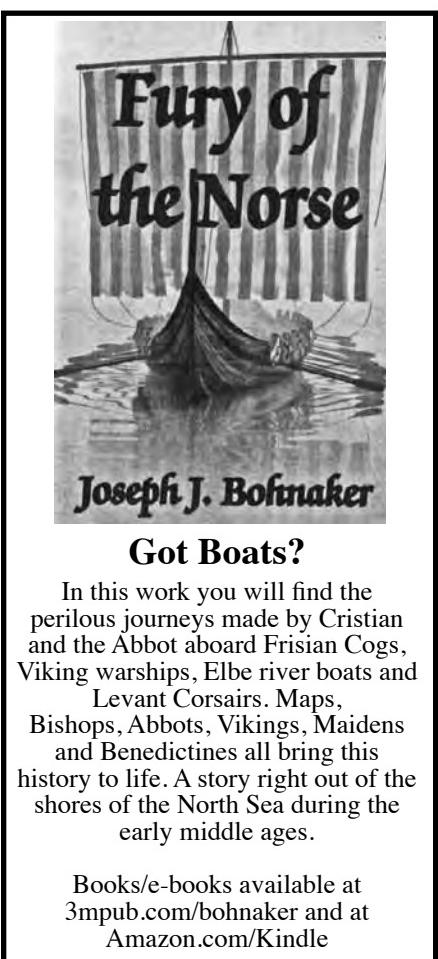


Tortoise





## Wyoming



Romp

AS29

In this work you will find the perilous journeys made by Cristian and the Abbot aboard Frisian Cogs, Viking warships, Elbe river boats and

Viking warships, Erie River boats and Levant Corsairs. Maps, Bishops, Abbots, Vikings, Maidens and Benedictines all bring this history to life. A story right out of the shores of the North Sea during the early middle ages.

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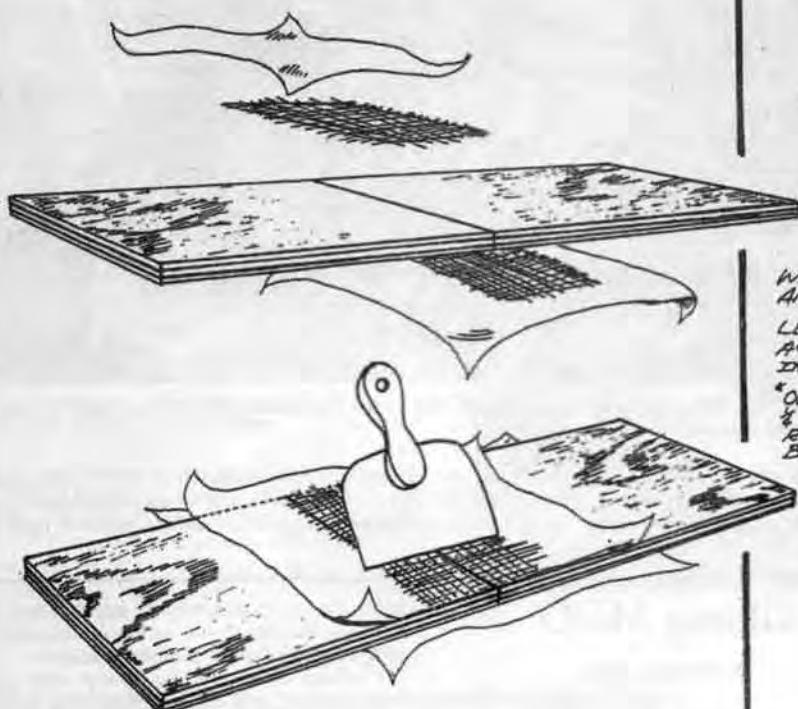
Romp

AS29



48 – *Messing About in Boats*, January 2019

# GLASS BUTT JOINT for PLYWOOD



TRY TEST JOINT BEFORE  
PUTTING IN BOAT!

① LAY WAX PAPER ON SMOOTH SURFACE,  
MASONITE, CARDBOARD ETC.

② CUT OUT TWO PIECES OF 3" OR 4"  
TAPE TO SPAN JOINT. LAY PIECE OF  
TAPE ON WAXED PAPER AND SATURATE  
WITH RESIN... AND ABOUT 2" BEYOND.

③ RESIN THE PLYWOOD... FLIP IT OVER  
ONTO THE TAPE USING AMPLE RESIN  
COVER WITH WAXED PAPER AND DRAW  
A PUTTY KNIFE OR STRAIGHT EDGE  
ACROSS JOINT.

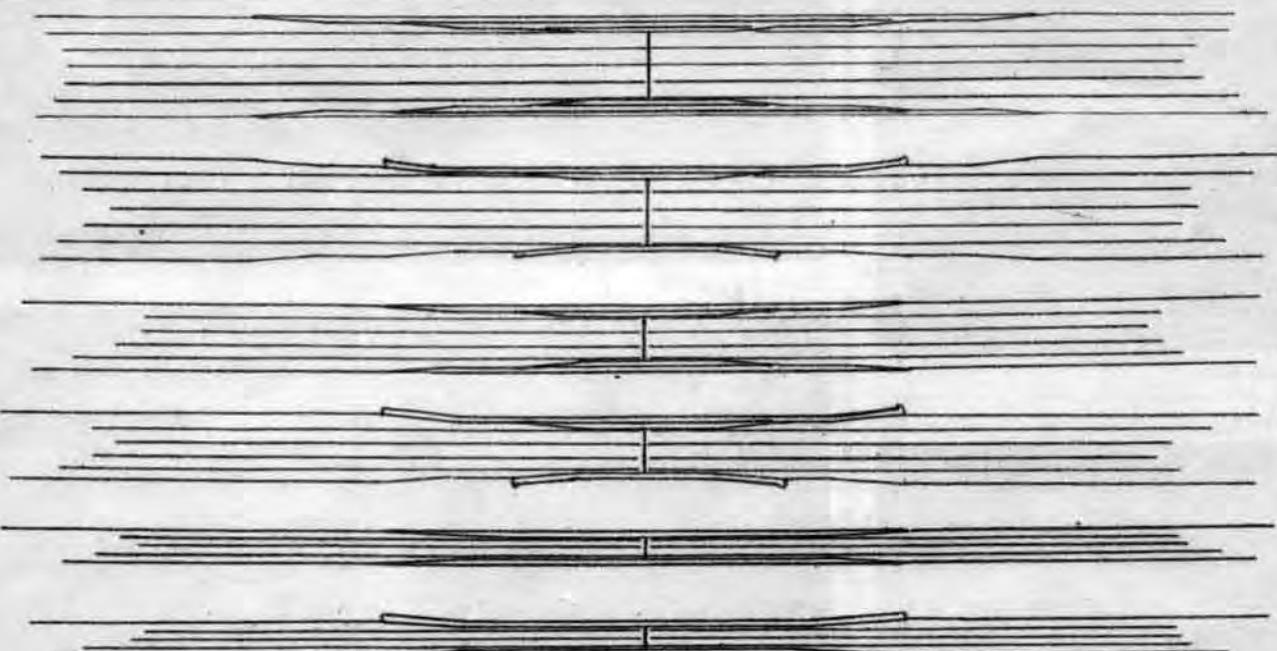
WAXED PAPER FEATHERS OUT THE JOINT  
AND LEAVES IT SMOOTH... NO SANDING.

LET JOINT CURE FOR A FEW HOURS  
ACCORDING TO TEMPERATURE, AND PUT  
IN BOAT.

"OVER THE KNEE" TEST JOINT MADE WITH  
1/4" PLYWOOD, 3" TAPE AND POLYESTER  
RESIN PROVED AMPLE STRONG... WOOD  
BREAKS LEAVING JOINT INTACT.

\* IF STRONGER JOINT IS WANTED,  
HOLLOW ENDS OF PLYWOOD ACROSS  
SLIGHTLY WITH DISC SANDER  
AND MAKE WITH  
MATT, TAPE AND EPOXY.

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Small Craft Illustration #14 by Irwin Schuster  
[irwinschuster@verizon.net](mailto:irwinschuster@verizon.net)

It is the end of October, with November just over the horizon. It has been cold, much below normal temperature for days, with occasional unpleasant rain, but today is warm and dry, still a bit below normal at 56°. It is cloudy this morning so there is no wind, a perfect day to take the canoe out.

At the tiny marina all of the boats have left the water, just a few rowboats and canoes stored out by the building for those few hardy souls, but none of them are here today even though the lake is glassy calm and the fall color is beautiful, slightly past peak. I have it all to myself.

As usual, I paddle north along the western shore, disturbing a few mallards who mutter among themselves as they swim out to their idea of a safe place. Most of them have left, as have the flocks of Canada geese that use this lake as a rest stop during their migration, no geese at all today.

The water is cloudy after the rain and there are a few new snags thrusting out from the shore. Up ahead I see one which might actually be a well camouflaged bird. The head turns and I see that it is an immature double crested cormorant sitting above the water on a branch, an all black body with a patch of dusty white on his breast helping him to fit in to the surroundings. As I come closer he tries to take flight but flops toward

## Buttoning Up

By Hugh Groth

the water, pushing with his churning feet, propelling himself forward until his small wings can gain enough thrust to lift his heavy body aloft. He goes neither far nor high, just out of reach. They are great fishermen, not good flyers.

Just past the point I come upon a lone duck, probably a migrating black duck, similar to a mallard but all black except for a bit of white on its head, not common here. The old walnut tree in the cove, one that was always such a menace with its bombarding nuts, seems to have given up. Most of the shore trees still have a few leaves, but this one is bare and brittle, lichen covering most of its branches, no sign of eventual spring renewal at the tips. It leans further out over the water than before, will probably be another new snag before long.

I pass a shore fisherman and, as I round the north end of the lake, a light breeze picks up off the starboard quarter, not really affecting my paddling. A peekaboo sun makes the rippling lake surface shimmer as I draw closer to the east side, once again in calm water. The clouds close in again and as I look

across the lake the color of the shore trees is once more mirrored on the surface.

No herons, no kingfishers and no aquatic wildlife to be seen until I reach the south end not far from the marina. There I find a lone goose and four more cormorants on a sand bar, trying to dry their wings with no sun. The season is changing, they need to get moving, but with the colorful maples and oaks on the hillsides, the bright sumacs and willows along the shore, all of it sprinkled with evergreens I find the scene cheerful. Maybe they do, too, maybe they dread a long flight.

Back at the marina I notice the two big tamaracks are now a dull orange, still holding on to their needles, their small cones fully open but still on the branches. Further along the path to the van the ground is covered with acorn caps beneath the many oaks, apparently their contributions have already filled the squirrels' storehouses for no squirrels are to be seen today.

It's only halfway through fall and yet everything seems to be buttoned up. Yes, the best of it may be over and we humans may not be as sensitive to the seasons as is the rest of the natural world, but I think there still may be a day or two left before serious snow when I can delight in a canoe ride. I don't plan on buttoning up just yet.

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## On the Importance of Hot Soup

My first Coast Guard duty station after a very short abbreviated boot camp was on the *Agazee*. She was a 125' cutter based out of Cape May, New Jersey. These boats were sometimes referred to as "A Buck and A Quarter" because of their rough ride. I replaced a guy who was non functional after the boat got singled up. It was a very seasick boat. I did learn a lot on that ship.

On my first rescue mission we were an hour and a half out of Cape May on a late winter rescue. I went down to the galley and found that the only body there was a warrant officer. He was the engineering officer. He was peeling potatoes. I asked why he was doing that.

He said that "Joe the cook was on leave and Enreco the steward was up in the crews' head praying to the porcelain gods."

"OK, so why are you doing this?" I asked.

He said matter of factly that he was also the commissary officer and one of his duties was to make sure that the crew got fed.

I told him to tell me what he was doing and I would take over. He was very pleased to find a volunteer. He already had a big 30 gallon kettle lashed down on the diesel range and had it about a third full of water. It was heating up. He said, "OK, finish these spuds and cut them up into bite sized chunks, then add a couple of bunches of carrots also chopped up small, then in the reefer you will find a chunk of beef, cut that up into small chunks and add that, too."

I said "OK, anything else?" He said "Yes, under the aft seat over toward the port side you will find some onions, add a couple of them." Then he added, "Come back in a half hour and this pot should be boiling, when it is turn the heat down about midway. Oh yes, add about a cup of salt. It should be ready to eat in about an hour, turn the heat down to low just to keep it warm. By the way, thanks, I'm glad to get the help. I have to go forward and see that the engineers are doing their job, Thanks again." That was the last time I saw him on that trip.

Since I was a little kid I hated onions so I modified his orders. Only one onion cut up very small and it went into the pot. By the time I was done I was feeling a little punky, the diesel range was giving off some bad smells. It always did that when the ship was rolling 10° or more. I went up to the main deck and out on the lee side door. I felt better just breathing good outside air.

After a couple of minutes I went forward and stuck my nose into the forward companionway where there was the crews' head and sure enough there were several seamen and one steward like the man said, "Praying to the porcelain gods. I went past the head and looked down into the engine room and saw two engineers. One was sitting between the jimmies with a bucket between his legs.

We had been underway for about three hours and I could hardly find anyone func-

## Sea Stories & Tall Tales

By Mississippi Bob

tioning, so I went up to the bridge to see what was happening there. There were several people there doing their thing keeping the boat alive. Don was at the wheel, he asked if I could take over for a while. I said sure and told him about the stew I was brewing and I said if it is boiling turn it down. He gave me the heading, gathered up a bunch of coffee cups and disappeared below.

Don was one of the few guys who I can remember names for. He was one of a long line of hooligans from the outer banks (the Fulchers). I happen to know that his dad was a retired chief bosun. He became one of my best friends on that boat. About a half hour went by and Don showed up with a tray with five mugs half full of stew that I had started. He gave a report that all was secure below. He warned that if anyone needed to use the head be careful that they don't step on anyone's head.

The soup went over very well and for the next ten hours Don and I traded off on the wheel and making a round of the ship, then returning to the bridge with mugs HALF full of either coffee or soup. Why half full? On a hundred and a quarter we opted for a lot of splash room in our cups when we were at sea.

In the morning we were approaching the vessel that were planning to tow. The chief bosun had the con when the captain showed up with a cup of stew. He relieved the bosun and commented on the soup. "Good stuff," he said.

When the bosun went below he said that he had to shake a bunch of seasick sailors and bring them back to life to help make up the tow. He was big enough that everyone listened when he gave orders. A few minutes later I was on the after deck with a bunch of green faced seamen who were downing mugs of soup.

After our tow was hooked up, we had it following nicely about 400' back. The trip in was much smoother with a following sea at the slower speed.

The bosun gave orders, "Jones, get the headphones on, you got the first towing watch. Smith, go relieve Don at the wheel. Jones, park next to the charley noble and talk to the bridge on your phone and keep the towing bit wet but for God sake don't fall overboard. Smitty, go chase the steward out of the head and tell him that I want a real meal in a half hour or he is fish bait."

This was life on the cutter *Agazee* in 1958.

### The Stowaway

I spent one summer while in the Coast Guard at the base in Galveston, Texas. This was to be the worst duty that I had in the four years that I was in the Guard. The problem

there was that we were always on guard duty it seems. I was the lowest ranking guy on a 40-footer crew and we were in the middle of the cold war. Remember back in the '50s there was a "Red under every bed."

Our normal duty station was tied to a buoy near the East Jetty guarding the entrance to the aby. We would get the names off all the ships entering the harbor and check that they were cleared to come in. If they were not cleared we would follow them until they got clearance. We had a few rescue missions that summer, that was the gravy. Mostly we would spend two shifts a day totaling 12 hours watching the harbor entrance.

One night we got put on surveillance of a "hot ship." Any ship that had been into a communist port within the previous six months was to be watched. Our ship that night was docked way down toward the west end of town. When the manpower was available we would have two guys on the dock and a boat patrolling the waterside, of that ship.

One of the guys on the dock watch got on the pay phone and a few minutes later a cab showed up on the dock and a bunch of young ladies got out and came over to join us. Someone ran back uptown and got some after hours beer and we set out to make the best of a long night. None of us really expected some "Red" to smuggle a bomb ashore that night.

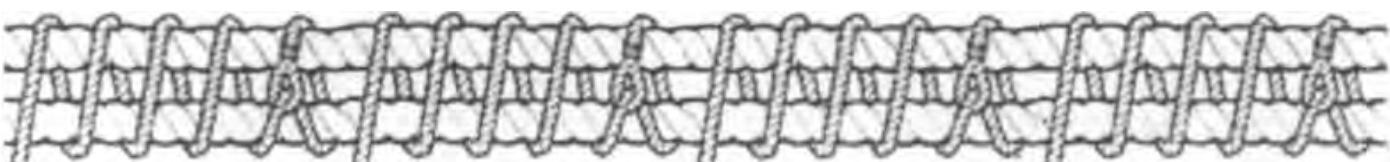
About three in the morning we got a call from the base that we should leave that dock watch and follow a different hot ship up toward Houston. We hurriedly got all the none crew folks off the boat and got underway. We rendezvoused with our charge and started following it up the ship channel. I went below into the cabin and found one tall thin Texas gal climbing out of our rope locker. Never did figure out how she fit into that close space but she was along for the ride. Not much we could do about it then, she was on board for the rest of the trip.

Near Houston we turned our charge over to a boat out of the Houston base and headed home. Our watch would be over before we got back to the our base and it was full daylight by the time we neared Galveston. What to do with this stowaway?

Our normal shift ended with going to the local fuel dock and filling the tanks. We had to pass right past the base to do this. The base had a tower over the boat house where the OD had a good view of the harbor. This dizzy gal with us would probably wave at him as we went by. We thought about throwing her overboard and decided against that.

We decided that she had to go before we reached the base so we landed at the ferry dock across the bay. Together we came up with the fare so she could get back to Galveston on the ferry. Goodbye lady, hope we never meet again.

This was nearing the end of my stay at Galveston as I had requested a transfer "anywhere." A few weeks later I was on my way to Alaska and some real good duty. Never did see our stowaway again.



Although only accessible with the proper equipment, the electronic ATONs came into their own with the hurricanes hitting the US in 2018. While buoys, day markers and the rest went adrift (or vanished), the electronic aids were back for use as soon as the shore stations were in operation. Of course, changes in channels from water action on the bottom were another matter, but at least some aids were available. The aid could be in the right place for the previous channel condition, but not any more as the channel had moved.

For example, at Shell Point (south of Tallahassee) Hurricane Kate moved the entrance to the main channel about 50 yards west from where it had been. Instead of a straight out entrance to the bay, there was a sharp turn to the west because a great deal of sand had been moved, closing off the former channel. However, all was not lost as the west day marker for the former channel entrance became the south day marker for the new channel. What had been the east day marker of the old channel was now the turn marker (take a sharp right going out). Local knowledge became vital until the tidal flow established the new channel and it stayed put. The question for those in the areas affected by the storms, is the channel still where it was?

For someone who started off with a 25hp outboard, these new 250hp outboards are something else. I think my father ended up with a 45hp on his boat (16' with small forward cabin) before he sold it. Given we could fish all day in Sarasota Bay on ten gallons of fuel, these new motors are rather expensive to use. *Boating* (November/December 2018, pp 62-64) had an interesting article on the annual estimated operational and maintenance cost of five different 250hp outboards. The average total estimated cost for the year for the five outboards in the report was \$75,541 with an average maintenance cost of \$12,827 and the average fuel cost of \$63,945. Of course, then there is the cost of the motor.

With the continuing development of unmanned aerial vehicles (UVA), or "drones" to most of us, the various commercial harbors may need the addition of a drone traffic control facility to keep the drones from colliding as they take things from one place to another. Specialized drones are being used to survey bridge structures, commercial hull conditions and general information on harbor conditions (both surface and bottom contours) among other things. I wonder if boat insurance policies cover damage caused by drones falling out of the sky?

If a boat is coming your way and you need to react to avoid a collision, how quickly can you do so? According to a study done by the Air Force it takes about ten seconds to see, react and have your vessel (in their case an aircraft) start to change course. Not included is the closing speed of the two vessels. Moving at 6 knots, your boat is moving 200 yards a minute. If the other boat is moving at 15 knots, it is moving at 500 yards a minute. If your height of eye is 7', the horizon (and any boat at that point) is 3 nautical miles away. Since a nautical mile is 1.15 statute miles (2,024 yards) and the closing rate is 700 yards a minute, you may feel that using up ten seconds to make and act on your decision is sufficient.

If the other boat is coming towards you from aft, unless you have a good lookout at all times, you may not see it until it is



## From the Lee Rail

By C. Henry Depew

much closer and things may be a little dicey. Up either, or both, boat speeds, the possible problem will develop more quickly and the reaction time more critical. If you want to do your own calculations, the basic formula is  $60 D/ST$  where 60 is one minute, D is the distance, S is the speed, T is the time factor or: time = distance/speed, speed = distance/time, distance = speed x time. Of course, time can be in hours or even seconds. You simply have to be consistent when doing the calculation.

When any major storm comes through an area, one of the after effects is debris on the bottom of the canals. The flooding at Shell Point from Dennis's storm surge put everything from refrigerators to parts of buildings in the canals. While not covered in all the damage reports, small boats using sonar moved through the canals and marked objects on the bottom to be checked. Following Michael's passage, the same operation is being carried out again by both governmental staff and private individuals. In

addition to shifts in the bottom from wave action those in the area must also look out for underwater obstacles until all are identified and removed.

I review books for a boating publication and one was on celestial navigation using a basic sextant and the solar and Polaris tables to find a location on the earth (an accurate watch is also needed). Polaris has been used for centuries in the northern hemisphere as a determination of latitude even though the users had no idea of latitude. Using a variety of tools, they would measure the height of Polaris above the horizon to see if they were on course for their destination. The navigator had to have been at the port before to get a measurement of that port's "latitude." If they were on course, the desired port would be ahead of them. The process worked for crossing the Indian Ocean (Africa to India and visa versa), the North Sea and the Atlantic. And with a sextant, it will work today because there are tables/charts that give the latitude of almost any commercial port. When you get there depends on the longitude (time) but at least you are going in the proper direction.



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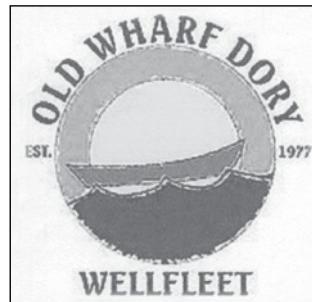
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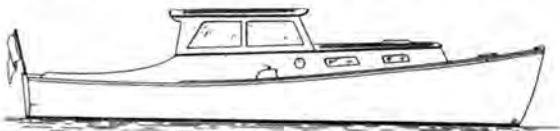
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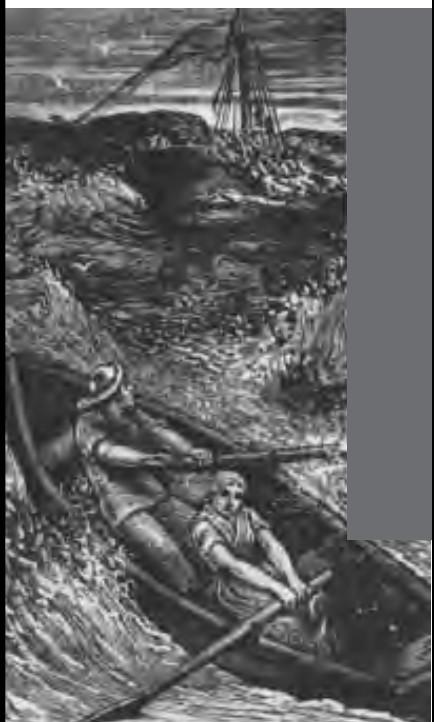
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MIKE MELKAVITCH, mailto:melkavitch@gmail.com?subject=Boat kit (2)

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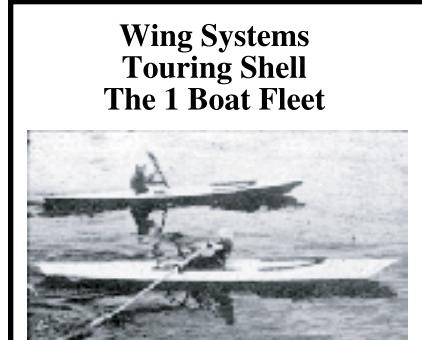
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